October 21, 2026

The Honorable Ayanna Pressley
United States House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representative Pressley:

On behalf of individuals with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), a neuromuscular disease, **Cure SMA is pleased to support your bipartisan Facilitating Access to Service and Timely Repairs for Wheelchairs Act, or FAST Repairs for Wheelchairs Act (H.R. 9364)**. Your legislation represents an important step forward in ensuring that individuals with SMA and others who rely on power wheelchairs can get their equipment repaired quickly, without facing unnecessary insurance barriers.

SMA is a genetic neurodegenerative disease that severely weakens muscles over time, taking away a person's ability to walk, sit without support, and perform other essential functions of everyday life. Cure SMA is the leading national organization that represents individuals with SMA in Massachusetts and across the country.

Nearly 80% of children and adults with SMA utilize power wheelchairs and other durable medical equipment (DME). Those who use a power wheelchair report spending at least 7 hours daily in their chairs, including 47% who use a wheelchair more than 12 hours per day, according to a recent Cure SMA survey. As one **adult with SMA** put it, "*Wheelchairs are our legs. Wheelchairs are a lifeline. Wheelchairs are independence.*"

The independence of people with SMA is put at risk every time their wheelchair breaks down or needs repair. The wheelchair repair system is broken due to the consolidation of wheelchair repair providers and insurance requirements. One **adult with SMA** said, *"regardless of the repair, the wheelchair provider must get a letter from my neurologist for insurance approval. In the past, they would turn this around quickly. Now, the burden falls on me to follow up with my doctor to make sure my repair stays on track."* The provider will only order the needed parts after they receive insurance approval, which delays an already lengthy process.

The FAST Repairs for Wheelchairs Act would help address one of the key wheelchair repair bottlenecks by prohibiting Medicare Advantage plans from imposing prior authorization, prescription, or medical documentation requirements on wheelchair repairs, while preserving review of initial evaluations and replacements. By removing this insurance bottleneck, wheelchair providers could order parts and schedule a repair technician sooner to address a damaged or broken wheelchair. Cure SMA strongly supports the FAST Repairs for Wheelchairs Act and asks that this streamlined process become the standard for all public and private insurance plans.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. Cure SMA looks forward to working with you in the 119th and 120th Congress to advance the legislation and expand its scope to also include Medicaid. For more information, your staff can contact Maynard Friesz, Vice President for Policy and Advocacy at Cure SMA, at 202-871-8004 or maynard.friesz@curesma.org.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Hobby
President

Maynard Friesz
Vice President, Policy