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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
Becky Martin, Advocacy Director
National Physicians Alliance
becky@npalliance.org
Cell: 941/518-7051

Clinician Action Network and National Physicians Alliance
Call for Resignation of HHS Secretary Tom Price

In an open letter (below), the Clinician Action Network (CAN) and National Physicians Alliance (NPA) are calling for the immediate resignation of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Tom Price. Given HHS’s efforts to sabotage the Affordable Care Act’s enrollment and marketing plans, Price’s repeated support for legislation that would throw millions of American into the ranks of the uninsured and raise cost for millions more, and the most recent revelation that Price has spent over $400,000 of tax-payer dollars on private jet travel, both CAN and NPA believe it’s time for Price to go.

"From the time he was nominated, we had concerns about Dr. Price's support for legislation that ran counter to the best interests of our patients. We were also very concerned with the stock trades he conducted while in the House of Representatives where he likely leveraged his position of influence to profit from trades and insider information. His continued ethically questionable actions, including his egregious and unprecedented misuse of taxpayer monies to travel on private jets, have simply proven our point that Tom Price is not fit for this position" say Drs. Manik Chhabra, co-founder CAN, and Manan Trivedi, President of NPA.

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For inquiries, contact Becky Martin becky@npalliance.org or 941/518-7501

The National Physicians Alliance is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that offers a professional home to physicians across medical specialties. We create research and education programs that promote health and foster active engagement of physicians with their communities. The NPA accepts no funding from pharmaceutical or medical device companies. Learn more at NPAlliance.org
We’ve been here before. Almost a year ago, we opposed the nomination of Dr. Tom Price for Secretary of Health and Human Services. As clinicians who put our patients first, today we call for Tom Price to resign.

A year ago, we were concerned that Dr. Price did not have a record of promoting policies that prioritized Americans’ health. As a legislator in the House of Representatives, he supported dismantling Medicaid, reducing funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and removing essential health benefits that would provide access to treatment for opioid use disorders, prenatal care, and contraception.

Prior to his confirmation, we learned that Dr. Price had traded stocks that stood to profit from his direct actions in the legislature, raising serious questions around his ethical conduct.

Regrettably, his tenure has only confirmed our fears.

In his confirmation hearings, Secretary Price recalled the lessons he learned as a practicing physician. One lesson he highlighted was that “many patients [he] knew or treated were never more angry and frustrated than when they realized that there was someone other than themselves and/or their physician making medical decisions on their behalf – when there was someone not involved in the actual delivery of care that was standing between them and their doctor or treatment.”

However, as Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) – that is precisely where Dr. Price has found himself: directly impeding patients’ ability to access treatment. Worse, he has shirked his duties in office and wasted taxpayer dollars in the process.

His brazen decision to misappropriate over $400,000 by traveling needlessly on private jets is only the most recent offense to come to light. Records indicate that he used public funding to travel to luxury resorts, areas where he owned property, speaking events for friends, and lunch with his son. New reporting puts his travel costs at over $1 million in just 8 months; his recent decision to pay back only $52,000 of these costs only highlights his lack of accountability.

Beyond these questionable ethics, Dr. Price has eagerly advocated for legislation that would increase cost of health insurance and reduce access to care. These policies, according to multiple Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates, would create anywhere from 20 to 32 million additional uninsured and were universally opposed by patient groups, doctors, nurses, hospitals, health systems, and insurers.

During this process, he provided at best, misinformation, and at worst, outright lies about the impact of the legislation he was promoting.

Most egregiously, Dr. Price has demonstrated dereliction of his duties at HHS, which has been used as a political tool for sabotage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), rather than as an institution for policy implementation. Under his leadership, HHS has used funding that was earmarked to increase enrollment to run ads against the ACA. The ACA enrollment period has been reduced by 45 days; television advertising and patient navigators have been cut; and access to the health insurance portal has been reduced with unnecessary periods of website shutdown.

The uncertainty he has created over continuing the cost-sharing reduction payments mandated under law has only served to destabilize the insurance markets and increase premiums for patients.

Tom Price should never have been confirmed. His conduct prioritizes self-enrichment, and raises critical questions about his commitment to “improve the lives of the American people, to help heal individuals and whole communities.” He has advocated cuts to programs impacting the most vulnerable Americans, while simultaneously wasting taxpayer resources. Now almost one year later, we believe that his actions in office warrant resignation.

**It’s time for Tom Price to go.**