

February 10, 2014

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid and Senator McConnell:

The undersigned state medical societies and national specialty organizations congratulate House and Senate negotiators on the introduction of H.R. 4015/ S. 2000, the *SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014*. Now, Congress is closer than it has ever been to enacting fiscally-prudent legislation that would repeal Medicare's fatally flawed sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula. It is critically important to build on this work and maintain the momentum.

Congress has been debating the shortcomings of the SGR policy for more than a decade, and now a solution to this failed policy is finally at hand. It is time to take action, and to stop the cycle of short-term patches that merely address the immediate crisis posed by whatever cut is currently pending. Further reliance on this mechanism to preserve patient access to care is fiscally irresponsible and has impeded innovation in delivering health care services for far too long.

To date, Congress has spent \$153.7 billion over 12 years on SGR patches, far more than the cost of permanently reforming the Medicare physician payment system. And, because of the cumulative nature of the formula, the cost of these short-term remedies rises each year.

The legislation introduced last week is the product of more than a year of bipartisan, bicameral work to build a stronger Medicare program. Short-term remedies are no longer acceptable. Now is the time to pass a long-term solution to the fatally flawed SGR and establish a transition to a more stable Medicare physician payment policy to better serve America's senior citizens.

Sincerely,

American Medical Association
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Disability Evaluating Physicians
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Home Care Medicine
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine
American Academy of Neurology

The Honorable Harry Reid
The Honorable Mitch McConnell
February 10, 2014

American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Otolaryngic Allergy
American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
American Academy of Sleep Medicine
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry
American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists
American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons
American Association of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
American College of Cardiology
American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Osteopathic Family physicians
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons
American College of Physicians
American College of Radiation Oncology
American College of Radiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Gastroenterological Association
American Medical Directors Association – Dedicated to Long Term Care Medicine
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
American Osteopathic Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
American Society for Radiation Oncology
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery
American Society of Clinical Oncology
American Society of Cytopathology
American Society of Dermatopathology
American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of Hematology
American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians
American Society of Nephrology
American Society of Nuclear Cardiology
American Society of Retina Specialists
American Thoracic Society

The Honorable Harry Reid
The Honorable Mitch McConnell
February 10, 2014

College of American Pathologists
International Society for the Advancement of Spine Surgery
Joint Council of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
Medical Group Management Association
National Association of Medical Examiners
National Association of Spine Specialists
Renal Physicians Association
Society for Vascular Surgery
Society of Critical Care Medicine
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Society of Hospital Medicine
Society of Interventional Radiology
The Endocrine Society
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

Medical Association of the State of Alabama
Alaska State Medical Association
Arizona Medical Association
Arkansas Medical Society
California Medical Association
Colorado Medical Society
Medical Society of Delaware
Medical Society of the District of Columbia
Hawaii Medical Association
Idaho Medical Association
Illinois State Medical Society
Indiana State Medical Association
Iowa Medical Society
Kansas Medical Society
Kentucky Medical Association
Louisiana State Medical Society
Maine Medical Association
MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society
Massachusetts Medical Society
Michigan State Medical Society
Minnesota Medical Association
Mississippi State Medical Association
Missouri State Medical Association
Montana Medical Association
Nebraska Medical Association
Nevada State Medical Association
New Hampshire Medical Society
Medical Society of New Jersey
New Mexico Medical Society

The Honorable Harry Reid
The Honorable Mitch McConnell
February 10, 2014

North Carolina Medical Society
North Dakota Medical Association
Ohio State Medical Association
Oklahoma State Medical Association
Oregon Medical Association
Pennsylvania Medical Society
Rhode Island Medical Society
South Carolina Medical Association
South Dakota State Medical Association
Tennessee Medical Association
Texas Medical Association
Utah Medical Association
Vermont Medical Society
Medical Society of Virginia
Washington State Medical Association
West Virginia State Medical Association
Wisconsin Medical Society
Wyoming Medical Society

cc: U.S. Senate