



Sound Policy. Quality Care.

April 6, 2010

Honorable Phil Roe
419 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Roe:

As the Alliance of Specialty Medicine (Alliance), our mission is to advocate for sound federal health care policy that fosters patient access to the highest quality specialty care and improves timely access to high quality medical care for all Americans. As patient and physician advocates, the Alliance supports your legislation, H.R. 4985, the "Medicare Decisions Accountability Act of 2010," which would repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board included as part of the "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act" (P.L. 111-148).

As we repeatedly noted during the debate of P.L. 111-148, the Alliance strongly opposes the **Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB)** or any other board resulting in an inappropriate delegation of Congress' oversight responsibilities. Medicare reimbursement rates are currently well below market rates, and will likely get worse as Congress continues to delay a long-term fix to the Medicare's Sustainable Growth Rate formula. The IPAB solution will arbitrarily ratchet down provider reimbursement further, without sufficient oversight and without care taken to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries receive the quality health care that they need and deserve. Further, as currently constructed by Congress, the Board does not have full authority over all aspects of the health care system, but rather is required to selectively exempt certain providers from its purview – placing more pressure to cut Medicare reimbursements in areas under its jurisdiction.

The Alliance certainly understands and appreciates concerns with the rising costs of health care. We would like to work with Congress to address this issue, however, the process and structure recently approved by Congress is fraught with potential unintended consequences – including restricting access to important specialty care interventions and services for Medicare patients. The Alliance believes that IPAB lacks the clinical expertise and the research capacity to examine the national and regional effects of proposed recommendations to ensure patients are not unduly impacted. We therefore strongly support your legislation to eliminate the IPAB.

Thank you for commitment and leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American Gastroenterological Association
American Urological Association
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Heart Rhythm Society
National Association of Spine Specialists
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions

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American Gastroenterological Association • American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery • American Urological Association
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