



**Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA**, Executive Vice President, CEO

July 3, 2007

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
United States Senate  
731 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Harkin:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express support for S. 1120, the "Preventive Medicine and Public Health Training Act." By authorizing \$43 million for preventive medicine residency training programs and financial assistance, including tuition and stipends, to resident physicians, S. 1120 would help improve our nation's ability to promote healthy lifestyles and prevent disease, disability, and premature death.

The federal government has funded physician residency training at teaching hospitals through the Medicare program since 1965. However, residents in preventive medicine receive training in both clinical (e.g., hospital) and non-clinical (e.g., schools of public health) settings, and therefore, preventive medicine residency programs do not fully benefit from graduate medical education funding through Medicare. Residents frequently pay out-of-pocket for the Masters of Public Health degree portion of their training. This cost can serve as a disincentive for students to pursue preventive medicine training. Tuition assistance, as provided for in your legislation, will help recruit more physicians to enter this important area of medicine.

Both preventive medicine training programs and the number of preventive medicine physicians are decreasing at a time when they are most needed to address the rise of chronic and preventable diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. Incentives such as those included in S. 1120 will help to ensure that our nation has the necessary physician workforce to address the complex health challenges we face.

Thank you for your leadership on preventive health issues. The AMA looks forward to working with you and your staff on this and other important public health measures to help our nation's citizens be healthy and productive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Maves". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. A thin vertical red line is positioned to the right of the signature.

Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA