



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

June 23, 2008

Dear Representative:

The American Medical Association (AMA) strongly supports the "Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008" (H.R. 6331), introduced by Ways and Means Committee Chairman Rangel and Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Dingell. With less than five legislative days remaining before devastating cuts are scheduled to take place, the AMA urges all members of Congress to support passage of H.R. 6331. This is a critical vote for the physician community.

On December 18, 2007, the Senate agreed by unanimous consent to delay Medicare cuts until July 1, 2008. The House followed suit the next day by a vote of 411-3. Though time is short, Congress must meet its self-imposed deadline by acting immediately to prevent payment cuts from going into effect.

The AMA appreciates the broad bipartisan support expressed by many members of the United States House of Representatives for halting pending Medicare physician payment cuts. These cuts threaten to undermine access to care for millions of Medicare beneficiaries. It is critical that the House and the Senate pass legislation promptly that provides positive payment updates for the next 18 months to allow the next Congress and a new Administration the opportunity to work together to finally replace the failed Sustainable Growth Rate formula.

Additionally, H.R. 6331 includes important reforms to the Medicare Advantage program by eliminating the deeming authority for health plans that automatically designates a physician as part of an insurer's network even though the physician has not received or signed a contract.

In the coming years, critical reforms must be considered if Medicare is to continue to keep its promise to our nation's senior and disabled populations. We look forward to working with all members of Congress in that endeavor.

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