

June 18, 2008

Dear Senator:

The undersigned state and national specialty chairs of their delegations to the AMA House of Delegates are extremely frustrated with the gridlock in the United States Senate and failure to enact legislation to avert Medicare physician payment cuts, despite the fact that a majority of Democratic and Republican Senators have voiced support for proposals to avert the crisis for 18 months and provide a 1.1% fee schedule increase in 2009.

There are less than 10 legislative calendar days before a scheduled 10.6% Medicare cut occurs. If Congress fails to act, physicians will be forced to make difficult practice decisions that will affect seniors' access to care, as well physicians' office employees. There is no acceptable excuse for the Senate and the House to fail to pass legislation to fulfill commitments Congress has made to avert Medicare physician payment cuts.

Medicare Advantage plans, hospitals and nursing homes receive annual updates to reflect increases in the cost of delivering care. Physician payments, on the other hand, have not kept pace with rising practice costs. In fact, the current Medicare physician payment rate is less than it was in 2001. Something simply has to give.

In the strongest possible terms we urge you and your Senate colleagues to pass legislation before July 1 to avert Medicare physician payment cuts as you have pledged.

Sincerely,

Medical Association of the State of Alabama – Burt F. Taylor, MD  
Alaska State Medical Association – Alex Malter, MD  
Arizona Medical Association – Jacqueline A. Chadwick, MD  
Arkansas Medical Society – John P. Burge, MD  
California Medical Association – Gerald Murphy, MD  
Colorado Medical Society – Robert Bogin, MD  
Connecticut State Medical Society – Mehdi S. Islami, MD  
Medical Society of Delaware – Stephen R. Permut, MD  
Medical Society of the District of Columbia – Joseph Guterrez, MD  
Florida Medical Association Inc – Troy M. Tippet, MD  
Medical Association of Georgia – Joseph P. Bailey, Jr., MD  
Hawaii Medical Association – Paul DeMare, MD  
Idaho Medical Association – David Madden, MD  
Illinois State Medical Society – Dennis Brown, MD  
Indiana State Medical Association – Mike Mellinger, MD  
Iowa Medical Society – Janice Kirsch, MD  
Kansas Medical Society – Terry Poling, MD  
Kentucky Medical Association – Robert R. Goodin, MD  
Louisiana State Medical Society – Lawrence L. Braud, MD  
Maine Medical Association – David Simmons, MD  
MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society – George S. Malouf, Sr., MD

Massachusetts Medical Society – Barbara Rockett, MD  
 Michigan State Medical Society – Cathy Blight, MD  
 Minnesota Medical Association – Frank Indihar, MD  
 Mississippi State Medical Association – Mary Gayle Armstrong, MD  
 Missouri State Medical Association – Jo-Ellyn Ryall, MD  
 Montana Medical Association – James E. Jarrett, MD  
 Nebraska Medical Association – Linda B. Ford, MD  
 Nevada State Medical Association – Richard P. Seher, MD  
 New Hampshire Medical Society – Georgia Tuttle, MD  
 Medical Society of New Jersey – Walter J. Kahn, MD  
 New Mexico Medical Society – Steve Kanig, MD  
 Medical Society of the State of New York – David Hannan, MD  
 North Carolina Medical Society – Henry J. Carr, Jr., MD  
 North Dakota Medical Association – Gaylord Kavlie, MD  
 Ohio State Medical Association – Steven J. Polsley, MD  
 Oklahoma State Medical Association – Bruce Storms, MD  
 Oregon Medical Association – Donald J. Schroeder, MD  
 Pennsylvania Medical Society – Charles Cutler, MD  
 Puerto Rico Medical Society – Ismael Toro, MD  
 Rhode Island Medical Society – Michael Migliori, MD  
 South Carolina Medical Association – Stephen Imbeau, MD  
 South Dakota Medical Association – James Engelbrecht, MD  
 Tennessee Medical Association – James C. Fleming, MD  
 Texas Medical Association – Sue Rudd Bailey, MD  
 Utah Medical Association – William L. Hamilton, MD  
 Vermont Medical Society – John Murray, MD  
 Medical Society of Virginia – Carol Shapiro, MD  
 Washington State Medical Association – Richard Ambur, MD  
 West Virginia State Medical Association – Constantino Y. Amores, MD  
 Wisconsin Medical Society – Kevin Flaherty, MD  
 Wyoming Medical Society – Mark Wurzel, MD

American Academy of Pharmaceutical Physicians and Investigators – Peter H. Rheinstein, MD  
 American Academy of Cosmetic Surgeons – Robert Jackson, MD  
 American Academy of Dermatology Association – Andrew Lazar, MD  
 American Academy of Family Physicians – Dale C. Moquist, MD  
 American Academy of Insurance Medicine – Shanklin Cannon, MD  
 American Academy of Neurology – Michael A. Williams, MD  
 American Academy of Ophthalmology – Samuel P. Solish, MD  
 American Academy of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery – Liana Puscas, MD  
 American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation – Leon Reinstein, MD  
 American Association of Clinical Urologists – Jeffrey E. Kaufman, MD  
 American Association of Neurological Surgeons – Philip W. Tally, MD  
 American Association of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine – John C. Kincaid, MD  
 American College of Allergy Asthma and Immunology – Alnoor A. Malick, MD  
 American College of Cardiology – Jerry D. Kennett, MD  
 American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists – Kathleen Fitzgerald, MD  
 American College of Physicians – William E. Golden, MD

American College of Radiology – Arl Van Moore, MD  
American College of Rheumatology – Gary L. Bryant, MD  
American College of Surgeons – Richard Reiling, MD  
American Gastroenterological Association – Robert Burakoff, MD  
American Medical Directors Association – Eric Tangalos, MD  
American Osteopathic Association – Peter B. Ajluni, DO  
American Society for Reproductive Medicine – Barry Verkauf, MD  
American Society for Surgery of the Hand – David Lichtman, MD  
American Society of Addiction Medicine – Michael Miller, MD  
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery – Priscilla Arnold, MD  
American Society of Clinical Oncology – Barbara McAneny, MD  
American Society of Hematology – Timothy M. Lopez, MD  
American Society of Plastic Surgeons – John R. McGill, MD  
American Society of Transplant Surgeons – John Roberts, MD  
American Thoracic Society – Joseph W. Sokolowski, MD  
American Urological Association – Gregory Slachta, MD  
College of American Pathologists – William V. Harrer, MD  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons – Philip W. Tally, MD  
Heart Rhythm Society – Michael Mirro, MD  
International Spine Intervention Society – Ben Schwachman, MD  
Renal Physicians Association – Louis H. Diamond, MD  
The Endocrine Society – Susan Sherman, MD  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons – Jeffrey P. Gold, MD