

March 26, 2014

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

The Honorable John A. Boehner  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

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

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Speaker Boehner, Minority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader Pelosi:

The surgical groups listed below strongly oppose the Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014, which seeks to patch the Medicare physician payment system for twelve months, and we encourage Representatives and Senators to vote against this short term patch. On February 6, the physician community delivered on its promise to unite around Medicare physician payment reform policy in the SGR Repeal and Medicare Payment Modernization Act (H.R. 4015/S. 2000 – SGR Repeal Act). Five days before the scheduled 24.1 percent cut goes into effect, we are extremely disappointed that Congress has failed to enact the SGR Repeal Act.

The Protecting Access to Medicare Act selectively chooses to implement one of the SGR Repeal Act's most fundamentally flawed provisions, the sections regarding misvalued codes, to "pay for" yet another short term patch, the seventeenth in the past decade. In essence, physicians are paying for their own patch. This action is unacceptable without the full benefit of the SGR Repeal Act. In numerous letters last year, we consistently opposed this flawed provision for its likely disproportionate effect on surgical services.

We are deeply disappointed Congress has lacked the political will to enact the SGR Repeal Act, which would benefit America's seniors and help stabilize the Medicare program. We once again call on Congress to return to bipartisan, bicameral efforts to resolve budgetary issues and enact the SGR Repeal Act.

Sincerely

American College of Surgeons

American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

American Academy of Ophthalmology  
American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons  
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons  
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics  
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery  
American Society of Metabolic and Bariatric Surgeons  
American Society of Plastic Surgeons  
American Urogynecologic Society  
American Urological Association  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Society for Vascular Surgery  
Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons  
Society of Gynecologic Oncology  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

cc: United States House of Representatives  
United States Senate