August 8, 2014

The Honorable Michael Burgess, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
2336 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Dr. Burgess:

On behalf of the approximately 12,000 members of the American Academy of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS), I am writing in support of H.R. 4695 and to recognize your leadership to improve the identification and treatment of Obstructed Sleep Apnea (OSA).

As you are aware, OSA is a common disease that is estimated to affect 20 percent of Medicare beneficiaries. Untreated OSA is commonly associated with other diseases and conditions such as type 2 diabetes, stroke, and hypertension, and increases the complexity of chronic disease management in older adults. Detection and effective management of OSA significantly improves overall healthcare outcomes and is an essential element of patient-centered care.

Your legislation, H.R. 4695, would amend the Social Security Act to include a sleep apnea screening in the initial preventive physical examination covered under the Medicare program. By including OSA screenings in the initial Medicare visit, physicians can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the general health of patients as they enter the Medicare program. The AAO-HNS supports H.R. 4695 and urges your fellow lawmakers to help advance this important legislation.

If you and your staff have any questions, please contact Megan Marcinko, Senior Manager for Congressional and Political Affairs, at 703-535-3796 or mmarcinko@entnet.org.

Sincerely,

David R. Nielsen, MD
Executive Vice President and CEO