



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
FAMILY PHYSICIANS  
STRONG MEDICINE FOR AMERICA

March 25, 2014

Hon. Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Hon. Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Hon. Ron Wyden  
Chairman, Committee on Finance  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Hon. Orrin Hatch  
Ranking Member, Committee on Finance  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the 110,600 members of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), I write to express our continued support for the bipartisan policy compromises achieved in *The SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014* (S. 2000). As you move forward in organizing this week's business in the Senate, the AAFP urges you to approve a bill containing these important policies.

Senate approval of the policies contained in S. 2000 is a critical and essential step forward in the process of repealing and replacing the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula and setting our nation's largest health care program on a more stable foundation. The AAFP continues to believe that the policies of S. 2000 will shift emphasis away from fee-for-service and toward new payment models that support advanced-delivery models demonstrating innovation in care delivery and higher quality care for beneficiaries—goals that we all share.

The AAFP recognizes that decisions associated with how to finance this proposal remain elusive. However, we believe the approach that led to the introduction of bipartisan, bicameral policy can lead to an agreement on the financing as well. The AAFP appreciates the extensive work that you and your staff have expended in developing S. 2000 through a meaningful bipartisan process with House negotiators, which included substantial stakeholder involvement. Failure to seize this opportunity would be disappointing and consequential.

Short of Congressional action, the SGR formula will trigger a 24-percent reduction in Medicare payments to physicians on April 1. This drastic reduction would make it increasingly difficult for family physicians to continue to accept Medicare patients at the same time as greater numbers of Americans reach Medicare age. Access to health care will be reduced and investment in

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health delivery transformation will be delayed. The AAFP urges you to pass the reforms within S. 2000 and work diligently with your House colleagues to identify the appropriate pathway of ensuring its enactment into law prior to April 1. We should not accept that our only path forward is the 17<sup>th</sup> short-term patch.

If the AAFP can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Burke ([kburke@aafp.org](mailto:kburke@aafp.org)), Director of Government Relations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Cain', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey J. Cain, MD, FAAFP  
Board Chair