



**American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons**

William J. Nelson, DDS  
*President*

Robert C. Rinaldi, PhD, CAE  
*Executive Director*

June 4, 2015

The Honorable Tom Price, MD  
US House of Representatives  
100 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Price:

On behalf of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS), the professional association that represents more than 9,000 oral and maxillofacial surgeons (OMSs) in the United States, thank you for introducing the “Medicare Patient Empowerment Act” (HR 1650), which would improve the Medicare patient-provider relationship, expand access to treatment for Medicare beneficiaries, and generate better treatment outcomes for Medicare patients.

All Americans, including Medicare beneficiaries, should have access to quality, affordable health care and the ability to make choices and decisions regarding the providers who best serve their health care needs. Oral and maxillofacial surgery is one of the few dental specialties whose members provide Medicare services; however, it is becoming increasingly difficult to treat Medicare patients as the government continues to cut payments for services and impose burdensome regulations. As a result, the number of OMSs who have chosen to stop accepting Medicare patients continues to grow.

Medicare beneficiaries should not be forced to seek care from providers they did not choose when this occurs. Rather, they should be able to independently enter into contracts with their chosen healthcare providers outside of Medicare and without penalty; something that is currently prohibited. We support the fact that your legislation would allow patients to use their Medicare benefits to see providers who are not enrolled in Medicare and allow such beneficiaries to submit their claims to the Medicare program. This is a unique and positive means of expanding patient access to care.

The AAOMS endorses the way in which HR 1650 would increase the number of providers who accept Medicare patients as a result of contracting freedoms. Our organization recognizes that the passage of the “Medicare Patient Empowerment Act” is an important step toward guaranteeing that Medicare beneficiaries maintain access to healthcare providers and we appreciate your leadership on this issue. Please contact Mr. Adam Brenman of the AAOMS Governmental Affairs Department at 847/678-6200 or [abrenman@aaoms.org](mailto:abrenman@aaoms.org) if we can be of any specific assistance in helping you move HR 1650 through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

William J. Nelson, DDS  
President