



American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

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President

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June 6, 2013

The Honorable John Cornyn
U.S. Senate
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cornyn:

On behalf of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS), the professional association representing more than 9,000 oral and maxillofacial surgeons in the United States, I would like to thank you for your leadership in introducing S. 351 to repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), thereby ensuring that the power to regulate Medicare payment policy remains in the hands of elected officials whose decisions are accountable to the people.

The IPAB places major Medicare-related health policy decisions at the mercy of a small group of unelected and principally unaccountable individuals. Further, in instances where the Board fails to act, their vested powers rest solely with the Department of Health & Human Services Secretary; a single individual wielding unchecked authority over one of the nation's most vital entitlement programs. This exclusionary framework precludes program transparency and guidance from industry stakeholders, and impedes the ability of Medicare beneficiaries, advocates and providers to collaborate with Congress to improve the Medicare program, including the promotion of new and improved treatments, procedures, and technologies.

In addition, the IPAB's recommendations have the very real potential for making indiscriminate cuts to Medicare that may negatively affect patients' access to healthcare. Healthcare providers already struggle with the frequent threat of cuts to their Medicare reimbursements. The IPAB would add another, completely separate system of cuts, making it much more likely that providers will be financially unable to treat Medicare patients, and patients may subsequently fail to receive timely and high-quality care.

Thank you again for introducing S. 351. The AAOMS is committed to participating in the reform of America's health care system and providing quality access to care for patients. Like you, we believe that the IPAB is not an appropriate solution. We welcome the opportunity to help your office move this legislation through Congress. Please contact Jeanne Tuerk, manager of the AAOMS Department of Governmental Affairs at 800/822-6637 or jtuerk@aaoms.org for questions or additional information.

Sincerely,

Miro A. Pavelka, DDS, MSD
President