

June 29, 2011

Letter to Senate Finance Committee, House Ways and Means Committee---

Dear Senator/Representative,

The undersigned medical organizations, representing physicians and other health care provider organizations dedicated to high quality imaging, are writing to convey our strong opposition to payment cuts to medical imaging services in the Trade Adjustment Assistance Extension Act of 2011. Further payment cuts in medical imaging services would negatively impact patient access to high quality, cost effective options in imaging and diagnostic services. Our organizations are deeply concerned that these cuts, if implemented, would further undermine efforts to promote the delivery of integrated, patient-centered care that could improve outcomes and help curb rising health care costs.

Over the years, legislative and regulatory changes have led to significant cuts in Medicare payments for advanced imaging and other diagnostic imaging procedures. Continued reductions to imaging services cannot be absorbed by physician practices without impacting quality and access to high quality care. In addition, these provisions would exacerbate an already challenging situation for physicians who serve Medicare patients by taking additional dollars away from Medicare to be used for an entirely unrelated program, all while doing nothing to address the broken and unsustainable Medicare physician payment system.

Therefore, we urge you to remove these provisions that further reduce patient access to medical imaging services. We stand ready to work with Congress to ensure that any future policy changes affecting diagnostic imaging take into account the substantial changes that already have been implemented by CMS, by Congress and by diagnostic imaging providers, and ensure that patients retain access to diagnostic services performed in physicians' offices.

American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Association of Clinical Urologists
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Cardiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Gastroenterological Association
American Medical Association
American Medical Group Association
American Society for Neuroimaging
American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of Nuclear Cardiology
American Urological Association
Association of Black Cardiologists

Cardiology Advocacy Alliance
Large Urology Group Practice Association
Medical Group Management Association
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions
Society of Cardiovascular Computed Tomography