

September 30, 2009

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
215 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baucus:

We are writing to express our serious concerns about language in the “America’s Healthy Future Act of 2009” that exempts Part A payments from the scrutiny of the newly established Independent Medicare Commission (IMC). While evaluating and addressing health care spending is critical to achieving comprehensive health care reform, it must be done across all parts of the delivery system and should not force one sector of the Medicare system to carry that burden.

In a September 22, 2009 letter sent to you regarding the Chairman’s Mark of the “America’s Healthy Future Act of 2009”, the surgical coalition stated our strong opposition to taking Medicare payment policy decisions away from Congress and replacing the transparency of Congressional hearings and debates with a minimally open process overseen by unelected officials with little accountability for the health care decisions it makes. We believe the creation of IMC is inherently flawed, and targeting only Part B payments – primarily payments to physicians, surgeons and other health care providers – as a means of bending the “cost-curve” is not sound policy and does little to provide the much-needed stability across the entire Medicare system.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons
American College of Surgeons
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
American Society of Breast Surgeons
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery
American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons
American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery
American Society of Plastic Surgeons
American Urological Association
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Society for Vascular Surgery
Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons
Society of Gynecologic Oncologists
Society of Surgical Oncology

