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Specialty Physicians Support Senate Bill to Repeal the IPAB

Unelected board will cut billions of dollars from Medicare limiting seniors' access to quality care

WASHINGTON, DC – The **Alliance of Specialty Medicine** (Alliance) today applauds **Senators John Cornyn** (R-TX) for introducing the [Health Care Bureaucrats Elimination Act](#). If enacted, this important legislation would repeal the **Independent Payment Advisory Board** (IPAB) and thereby protect seniors from Medicare cuts that could threaten their access to care. Joining Senator Cornyn as initial cosponsors of Senate Bill 3653 are Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Jon Kyl (R-AZ), Pat Roberts (R-KS), and Tom Coburn (R-OK).

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act included the IPAB as a mechanism to insulate the Congress from criticism and responsibility for drastic cuts to the Medicare program. Instead, it allows for a board of unelected officials to cut billions of dollars from the program without Congressional approval. By 2015, the IPAB will have the power to cut billions from the Medicare program in addition to the \$500 billion in cuts to Medicare included in the recently passed health care legislation.

Austin, Texas neurosurgeon **Alex B. Valadka, MD, FACS**, spokesperson for the Alliance and member of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons and Congress of Neurological Surgeons, stated, "Charging the IPAB—a board of unelected bureaucrats—with the task of cutting more money from an already cash-strapped system will put patients at an even higher risk of being unable to access the health care they need. We are thankful that these Senators are making patients a priority and working to repeal the IPAB. I'm hopeful that more will join in this cause."

"As specialty doctors, our main goal is to help ensure that patients have access to the health care they need to get better and, as doctors, we're very concerned that the IPAB will have unprecedented power to make cuts to the Medicare program," added Dr. Valadka. "With all of the cuts that will result from the health care bill, we believe that empowering a board of unelected officials to make mandatory cuts of \$4 billion a year to Medicare will only result in more bad news for patients."

The Alliance, which sent a letter to **Representative Phil Roe** (R-TN) in April showing support for his efforts in the House to repeal the IPAB, is concerned that IPAB members will lack the clinical expertise and the research capacity to examine the national and regional effects to ensure patients are not left without the care they need because of the IPAB's cost cutting measures.

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*The **Alliance of Specialty Medicine** is an organization of national medical societies, based in Washington, DC, which represents specialty physicians in the United States. This non-partisan group is dedicated to the development of sound federal health care policy that fosters patient access to the highest quality specialty care. Member organizations include: American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery; American Association of Neurological Surgeons; American Gastroenterological Association; American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery; American Urological Association; Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations; Congress of Neurological Surgeons; National Association of Spine Specialists; Heart Rhythm Society; and Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions. For more information, please visit www.specialtydocs.org.*