



The Key to Good Health

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## **Specialty Doctors Praise Passage of Matheson Amendment on SGR Reform and Call for Permanent Fix**

*Alliance of Specialty Medicine calls for a new, permanent Medicare reimbursement formula to ensure quality medical care for seniors*

**WASHINGTON** —The [Alliance of Specialty Medicine](http://www.AllianceofSpecialtyMedicine.org) (Alliance) today praised the House of Representatives' vote to include a permanent fix to the Medicare physician payment formula in legislation to replace the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

“Congress is beginning to understand that any part of health care reform must include a permanent fix to the outdated Medicare reimbursement formula, also known as the Sustainable Growth Rate or SGR,” said Dr. Alex B. Valadka, a neurosurgeon from Austin, TX and spokesperson for the Alliance. “As the new Congress begins a hard look at ways to improve the health care reform law, an affirmative vote like this on the SGR is encouraging.”

The vote by the House was on an amendment by Rep. Jim Matheson (D-UT) to H.Res. 9. This resolution instructs certain key committees of the House to begin to work on legislation to replace the health care reform law. The Matheson Amendment gives specific instructions to these committees to come up with a permanent fix to the flawed SGR formula.

The Sustainable Growth Rate is Medicare's current formula for determining annual updates to physician payments for services. In late December of 2010, Congress approved a one-year fix to this formula, which would have mandated physician reimbursements reductions of 24.9% on January 1, 2011. If Congress does not act to address the flawed SGR formula, those postponed cuts will take effect on January 1, 2012.

“This new Congress must honor its commitment to seniors by providing some stability to the system through a new SGR formula and help ensure Medicare patients continue to receive the best quality medical care possible,” Valadka said.

The Alliance of Specialty Medicine actively engaged in policy discussions during the health care reform debate and continues to work with Members of Congress to develop sound public policies that strengthen our nation's health care delivery system.

For more information on the Alliance, visit [www.SpecialtyDocs.org](http://www.SpecialtyDocs.org).

*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 Association of Orthopaedic 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](http://www.specialtydocs.org).*