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Alliance of Specialty Medicine Members Join With More Than 70 Patient and Provider Organizations Opposing Independent Payment Advisory Board

Groups Urge Lawmakers to Drop Ill-Advised Health Reform Provision for Future of Medicare

(Washington, DC) –Members of the [Alliance of Specialty Medicine](http://www.specialtydocs.org), an organization of national medical societies which represents specialty physicians in the United States, have joined dozens of other organizations concerned about Medicare beneficiaries – including the **National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare** and the **Easter Seals** -- in opposition to the establishment of the **Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB)** included in the Senate-passed health reform bill ([H.R. 3590](http://www.congress.gov/bills/111/house/3590)). The organizations just sent **Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid** and **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** a [letter](#) urging lawmakers to exclude it from the final health reform legislation.

Several major concerns outlined in the letter include:

- The IPAB is unnecessary. While the purpose of the IPAB is to reduce the per capita rate of growth of Medicare spending indefinitely, in most years, Medicare's per capita growth has been below or equal to growth in the private sector;
- The IPAB reductions would be in addition to the \$400-\$500 billion savings in provider payments already included in health care reform legislation, which could jeopardize both access for Medicare beneficiaries and even infrastructure for the entire health care system;
- The IPAB would essentially assume authority over the Medicare program;
- This Board of officials appointed by the President would be required to make recommendations to reduce per capita Medicare spending regardless of whether it was growing faster than general health care inflation;
- The IPAB would only be accountable to the President;
- The proposal usurps congressional authority over the Medicare program, greatly limiting the ability of Medicare beneficiaries, advocates, and providers to work with Congress to improve the program.

More than 70 organizations -- representing millions of Medicare beneficiaries and the millions of Americans who care for and provide a wide range of services, treatments, and medical technologies to this important segment of our population -- signed this letter. We are advising Congressional leaders to abandon the IPAB concept as it is "an ill-advised provision for the future of Medicare."

For more information on the position of the Alliance of Specialty Medicine on health reform issues, visit:

<http://www.specialtydocs.org/healthcare/index.html>.

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Editor's Note: Members of the Alliance of Specialty Medicine are available for interviews.

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 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.