

Dear Patient,

As your physician, my ability to treat you may soon be at risk. According to Washington's flawed Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula, physicians will see a **21% decrease in Medicare reimbursement** starting April 1, 2010. This cut will also include TRICARE, the insurance for our military families. Understanding that we have a tremendous number of Medicare patients in our community, a 21% reduction will be catastrophic for some medical practices that are already having difficulty just getting by. This reduction, however, won't just affect Medicare patients. Essentially all insurance companies now set their reimbursement rates in proportion to Medicare. A reduction of 21% by Medicare will also result in a 21% reduction in virtually all insurance compensation. Medical care is one of the largest employers in Manatee County and the results for this community will be devastating. Employees will have to be let go. Our fragile local economy will be further harmed. This alone could very well damage our community as much as the recent recession.

Physician practices may be forced to limit appointments or cease taking new Medicare patients. It is expected that some physician practices will merge in an attempt to survive. Physicians close to retirement may very well do so. Recruiting young physicians to the region will become increasingly difficult. If doctors can't make ends meet, they will leave their practices to seek other forms of employment. If you want to continue to have the quality and access to medical care you currently have, please contact your U.S.

Senators and Representative at the addresses below:

**Sen. Bill Nelson**

United States Senate  
716 Hart Senate Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20510-0905  
FAX 202-228-2183  
<http://billnelson.senate.gov>

FAX 202-228-5171  
[info@lemieux.senate.gov](mailto:info@lemieux.senate.gov)

**Rep. Vern Buchanan**

United States House of Representatives  
1516 Longworth Building  
Washington, DC 201515-3132  
FAX: 202-226-0828  
<http://www.buchanan.house.gov/contact.shtml>

**Sen. George LeMieux**

United States Senate  
356 Russell Senate Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20510-0906

Form letters will be made available for your use. Faxing is probably the best way to send your message. Regular mail is inevitably delayed, as it is rerouted undergoing additional scrutiny for security reasons. You can also go to your legislator's website and send an email message. We need your help. Please make your voices heard before it is truly too late.

Thank you,