

March 10, 2010

Dear Senator:

As a physician, I firmly believe that Congress must repeal Medicare's sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula.

The Medicare physician payment formula has been flawed from its inception, and since 2002 Congress has had to intervene repeatedly to avert steep annual payment cuts and preserve access to care for patients.

Putting another Band-Aid on the problem is no longer a viable solution. Seniors are concerned about losing access to their physician. And I am concerned that it is fiscally irresponsible to put this problem off yet again. Each time Congress has passed a short-term intervention, it has only deepened the payment cuts in future years and increased the cost of permanently resolving the problem. The time for temporary patches has come and gone.

Florida physicians currently face a critical workforce shortage. Half of the physicians in practice today are over the age of forty-five. Many of them are deciding to leave Florida or retire early because they are frustrated. New medical school graduates leave Florida opting to begin their careers in states that have better malpractice reform and better reimbursement. If these trends continue, it will become more and more difficult to find good healthcare in Florida.

Stand with the patients and physicians of our state. Support a permanent repeal of the SGR formula.

Sincerely,

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