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Medical
Association
of Georgia

Building a Better State of Health Since 1849

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**MEDICARE BILL FAILS TO ADVANCE IN SENATE, MAG PRESIDENT
URGING EVERY PHYSICIAN IN GEORGIA TO CALL U.S. SENATORS**

I am extremely disappointed to inform you that the U.S. Senate yesterday failed to vote for “passage of cloture” (i.e., formal consideration) of the *Medicare Improvements to Patients and Providers Act* (H.R. 6331) by a vote of 58 to 40. (This was the same bill that was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday by a vote of 355 to 59.) Cloture would have almost certainly ensured that the measure would have passed the Senate. In a procedural move, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid changed his vote to “No” so the bill could be considered at a future date. The measure effectively fell one vote short of the 59 needed for consideration.

Votes were generally split along party lines, although nine Republicans did break ranks to support physicians and patients. Unfortunately, both of Georgia's senators cast no votes – and they have not articulated an acceptable reason for doing so.

MAG will continue to press Sen. Saxby Chambliss and Sen. Johnny Isakson for a comprehensive Medicare funding solution, and **I'M ENCOURAGING EVERY PHYSICIAN IN THE STATE TO CALL SEN. CHAMBLISS AND SEN. ISAKSON USING AMA'S GRASSROOTS HOTLINE AT (800) 833-6354 ASAP AND URGE THEM TO BECOME ACTIVE ADVOCATES FOR H.R. 6331 WHEN THEY RECONVENE FOLLOWING THE JULY 4 RECESS.** Tell them that their failure to demonstrate leadership in this critical area is unacceptable and tell them that the path we're on is unsustainable for our health care system.

I can assure you that MAG will continue to provide you with timely and relevant updates as our advocacy strategy evolves.

You can also visit AMA's Web site at www.ama-assn.org for additional information.

I'd like to express my genuine thanks to those MAG members who continue to support our advocacy efforts to develop a permanent and responsible Medicare funding solution so our patients have timely access to health care and the peace of mind they deserve.

Your efforts are making a significant difference.

Sincerely,

Jack M. Chapman Jr., M.D.
President, The Medical Association of Georgia