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FOR RELEASE NOVEMBER 6, 2009

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**MAG DISAPPOINTED WITH AMA SUPPORT FOR H.R. 3962,
SAYS BILL IS BAD FOR PATIENTS AND PHYSICIANS**

ATLANTA – The Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) says that it is disappointed with the American Medical Association’s (AMA) support for H.R. 3962, according to MAG President Gary C. Richter, M.D.

The Atlanta-based gastroenterologist says, “We believe that this bill would create a staggering volume of new federal regulatory requirements for medicine, that it isn’t sustainable from a budget standpoint, that a public health insurance option may lead to a single-payer system, that the measure lacks meaningful tort reform and actually discourages proven reforms like limiting attorney fees and malpractice caps, and that the bill does not fix the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula.”

Dr. Richter adds that MAG is part of a coalition of state medical and national specialty societies that represents nearly 50,000 practicing physicians from across the U.S. that opposes a public health insurance option and the expansion of government control into medical care.

He explains that the coalition supports patient-centered legislative solutions that will protect the physician-patient relationship; protect the patient’s right to choose their doctor; protect the patient’s right to choose their health insurance; protect the right of physicians and patients to privately contract; and ensure that quality determinations are made by physicians.

Dr. Richter says the coalition will advocate these positions at AMA’s interim meeting, which begins tomorrow in Houston. He says that MAG and a number of other state medical and national specialty societies are introducing an emergency resolution that will call for AMA to rescind its support for H.R. 3962 during the meeting because the measure is inconsistent with AMA policy.

“AMA has traditionally been an important advocacy organization for physicians in this country, but they made a mistake in supporting H.R. 3962,” says Dr. Richter. “It’s bad for patients and it’s bad for physicians.”

With more than 6,000 members, MAG is the leading voice for physicians in Georgia. Go to www.mag.org/nationalhealthcarereform for additional information.

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