Dear all:

MAG will be sending an alert out today on HR 5 – Congressman Phil Gingrey’s bill that calls for tort reform ($250,000 cap on noneconomic damages) and a repeal of IPAB. It is important for you to contact your Congressman and ask for their support of HR 5. I have personally contacted each Congressman’s office about MAG’s support of this bill. It is necessary they also hear from you.

Below are some important points to make:

**Independent Payment Advisory Board**
The IPAB, which was created by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), is an independent board of 15 unelected and largely unaccountable government bureaucrats whose primary purpose is to cut Medicare spending. The IPAB threatens the ability of the people’s elected representatives in Congress to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries have access to the health care they need, when they need it. The many problems with IPAB include the following:

- IPAB members are appointed solely by the President, fewer than half can be health care providers, and none are permitted to be practicing physicians or be otherwise employed. Even worse, if IPAB fails to report recommendations or never becomes operational, the power to make significant Medicare policy decisions will rest solely in the hands of a single individual - the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

- Providers representing roughly 37 percent of all Medicare payments, including hospitals and hospice care, are exempt from IPAB cuts until 2020; thus IPAB directed cuts will disproportionately fall on all other providers, including surgeons.

- Without a permanent solution to the Medicare’s sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula, physicians are essentially subject to "double jeopardy" with cuts from both the SGR and IPAB.

- IPAB severely limits congressional authority and eliminates the transparency of hearings, debate and the meaningful opportunity of stakeholder input.

**Medical Liability Reform**
With regard to medical liability, as you are aware, our current system does not serve patients or providers. Medical lawsuit abuse is forcing good doctors out of the practice of medicine. Meritless lawsuits are deteriorating the doctor-patient relationship and causing physicians to practice defensive medicine. This drives up health care costs for everyone.

The medical liability section of H.R. 5 is based on time-tested reforms that have been in place in several states, including California and Texas, for many years. These reforms have been shown to lower costs and preserve access to care for patients. Further, these reforms will help reduce our national debt at a time when we all agree that federal savings are sorely needed.
Thank you in advance of your time.

Donald

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