



October 19, 2009

The Honorable Kay Hagan
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hagan:

The North Carolina Medical Society values your continued attention to the ongoing healthcare debate and the pending Medicare Physicians Fairness Act of 2009. In follow up to our letter from last week supporting S 1776, I am writing to reaffirm that position as well as offer additional information regarding the goals of the NCMS.

Senate Bill 1776 makes significant strides towards a permanent solution to the annual problem of repairing a flawed Sustainable Growth Rate formula. The temporary fixes enacted since 2005 have only increased the cost to taxpayers each year with little benefit to providers or beneficiaries. The passage of S 1776 is a critical step toward wiping the slate clean and creating a payment system that focuses on quality, cost efficient care.

While the North Carolina Medical Society remains supportive of S 1776, we are also committed to future physician fee schedule updates not currently included in the legislation. Updates to reflect changes in the underlying cost of providing physician services are vital to a strong provider network and uncompromised access for the growing number of seniors enrolled in the Medicare program.

Therefore, we urge you to support the passage of the Medicare Physicians Fairness Act of 2009 as well as an updated physician fee schedule as Congress moves forward in its conversations on healthcare.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Seligson
Executive Vice President, CEO

cc: Al Osbahr, MD, President