

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid:

On behalf of the American Society of Nephrology, I urge you and your fellow members of the Senate to prevent the drastic 21 percent physician payment cut effective March 1, 2010, by supporting HR 4691. Swift Congressional action that maintains reasonable payment rates for physicians is imperative to preserve access to care for the millions of seniors and members of our armed forces that rely on Medicare and TRICARE.

The sustainable growth rate (SGR) is a fundamentally flawed formula that annually imperils the availability of Americans' health care. Without a permanent solution, many physicians will soon be forced to limit the number of Medicare and TRICARE patients they treat in order to keep their practice doors open. ASN recognizes the financial challenges our nation faces at this time, but it is critical that Congress address the issue this week—and that the problem be permanently resolved—to defend access to quality health care for our nation's elderly, disabled, and military families.

Please act now to pass HR 4691, and move quickly replace the broken SGR formula with a system that reflects the actual cost of care once and for all.

Sincerely,



Sharon Anderson, MD
President, American Society of Nephrology