Personalized versions also sent to Senators Kennedy and Edwards:

June 12, 2 001

The Honorable John McCain
United States Senate
241 Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator McCain:

As the Senate prepares for floor consideration of patient protection legislation, I am pleased to offer the assistance of the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine (ACP-ASIM) in support of passage of the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001, S. 283. ACP-ASIM is the nation's largest medical specialty society, and the second largest medical organization in the United States consisting of 115,000 physicians and medical students.

ACP—ASIM strongly endorsed S. 283 earlier this year, as it was the only bill that translated general patient rights principles into the full measure of legal protections that patients require. The College continues in its commitment to the bill as it includes the key elements the organization believes should be included in a patient bill of rights:

- An effective and timely appeals mechanism for patients that are denied access to needed services.
- The right of individuals to hold managed care plans accountable in a court of law for decisions that have harmed them or their family members. We appreciate the efforts you and the other co-sponsors have made to craft language that affirms this right in a way that will not expose employers to liability for health plan determinations--or open up health plans to unwarranted lawsuits and excessive damages.
- An assurance that health plan determinations of medical necessity will be based on professional standards of appropriateness based on clinical evidence, rather than a health plan's own criteria.
- Guaranteed choice of physician and access to specialty care.

We are pleased for the upcoming opportunity to advance this much-needed legislation and look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff toward the goal of enactment in this session of Congress.

Sincerely,

William J. Hall, MD, FACP
President