



American College
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American Society
of Internal Medicine

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July 24, 1998

Hon. Greg Ganske
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Rep. Ganske:

The American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine, representing over 100,000 physicians who specialize in internal medicine, believes that the patient protections in H.R. 3605 are far preferable to those included in H.R. 4250. We appreciate your courageous and determined support for protecting the rights of patients enrolled in managed care and other health plans.

Specifically, H.R. 3605 includes provisions that would hold all health plans, including those who are exempt from state regulation under ERISA, accountable for decisions that result in death or harm to a patient. Compared to H.R. 4250, H.R. 3605 also has better provisions relating to access to specialty care within a health plan's network of physicians and other health professionals, more extensive internal quality improvement requirements, and less restrictive requirements relating to appeal of health plan denials to a physician who is not associated with the health plan.

ACP-ASIM recognizes that the manager's amendment to H.R. 4250 is intended to improve provisions relating to coverage of emergency care, "gag rules", and appeals. Even with such changes, H.R. 3605 goes much further in providing patients with the rights and patient protections that we consider to be essential. The resolution from the Rules Committee does not offer an opportunity for members of the House to vote on other amendments that would improve H.R. 4250.

Consequently, ACP-ASIM urges members of Congress to vote today in favor of H.R. 3605 and against H.R. 4250.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harold C Sox".

Harold C. Sox, MD
President