

ACP

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS
INTERNAL MEDICINE | *Doctors for Adults*

July 24, 2008

Letter Sent to Senators Who Switched Their Vote to Override Veto of H.R. 6331

Dear Senator Bond, (also Cochran, Wicker and Lugar):

On behalf of the American College of Physicians, representing 126,000 physicians in internal medicine and medical students, thanks for voting to override the presidential veto of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act, H.R. 6331, on July 15th. While it would have been more helpful had you supported the bill earlier in the face of the harsh cuts physicians and patients around the country were facing, we are grateful the House and Senate were able to bring about enactment of the legislation over the objection of the White House and, in so doing, prevent these cuts from taking place.

Because the Congress was able to act, America's internists will not face payment reductions under Medicare for the next 18 months but instead will see a continuation of current rates this year and a 1.1% increase in reimbursements in 2009. This increase will create temporary stability for our physicians and also allow them to continue to care for and treat both new and established Medicare patients in their practices.

ACP was also particularly pleased with the inclusion of language in H.R. 6331 that incorporated and addressed our top priorities for the 110th Congress: improved payments for primary care visits through a change in how HHS applies budget neutrality adjustments, and increased funding for the Medicare Medical Home demonstration project. Both of these provisions will have a lasting, positive impact on primary care and the way health care is delivered in the United States today.

Thank you again for voting to override the President's veto of H.R. 6331. The College looks forward to working with you in the future to identify a long-term solution to the physician payment system under Medicare.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Harris, MD, FACP
President