

September 15, 1998

The Honorable Bill Archer
U.S. House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Archer:

The undersigned organizations, representing over 200,000 physicians, are writing to urge you to oppose any amendment that would delay, or place a moratorium on, implementation of resource-based practice expenses (RBPEs).

The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 delayed implementation of RBPEs from January 1, 1998 to January 1, 1999; phased in implementation over four years; and directed HCFA to publish a new proposed rule using data on actual costs to the maximum extent practicable. HCFA has published a new proposed rule that complies with the BBA 97 requirements. The new proposed rule will result in substantially less redistribution of Medicare physician payments than under HCFA's original proposal.

We see no basis for Congress to further delay or block implementation of RBPEs. The Ways and Means Committee played an important role in fashioning the language in the BBA 97, considering the views of all affected parties. There is no basis for re-opening the controversy over RBPEs by changing the timetable for implementation mandated by BBA 97.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Family Physicians
American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine
American College of Rheumatology
American Geriatrics Society
Renal Physicians Association