



November 18, 2009

Dear Senator:

On behalf of our organizations, who represent providers, practitioners, patients, caregivers, clients, and families, we write in support of an important end-of-life care measure contained in the House version of health reform, H.R. 3962, the Affordable Health Care for America Act. We ask the Senate to include this provision in their health reform package.

The House bill contains a provision that would provide Medicare coverage for a voluntary consultation between enrollees and practitioners to discuss advance care planning issues. Consultations could be provided every 5 years, or more frequently if the enrollee undergoes a significant change in their health.

We believe these voluntary options would improve the quality of care for America's seniors for several reasons.

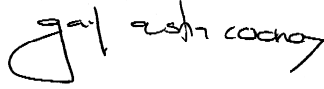
- First, many seniors are not aware of their end-of-life options. Many caregivers and extended family members lack the expertise to provide the proper guidance in these situations.
- Second, physicians would benefit from understanding patients' needs and goals, whatever they may be. This information often is not conveyed to them at all, or not until the very final stages of the patient's life. Physicians clearly prefer to provide care based on the specific wishes of the patients.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Senate include this provision in their health reform bill for floor consideration. We believe this voluntary, humane approach will improve patient care and make significant strides toward ascertaining and then honoring the desired course of care for the most vulnerable Americans, those at the end of their lives.

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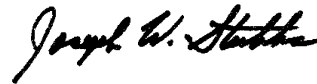
With Kind Regards,



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