

PARCA

Ensuring Patients' Access to Care

December 11, 2009

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Harkin:

As you are aware, the organizations within the *Patients' Access to Responsible Care Alliance* (PARCA) represent hundreds of thousands of non-MD/DO healthcare professionals, and millions of patients who both need and benefit from the wide range of highly skilled healthcare services our respective members provide.

In recognition of your leadership in the nation's reform of healthcare, we would like to thank you for your continued efforts to ensure that provider non-discrimination is appropriately addressed in the final legislative package enacted by Congress.

As you have long recognized, provider discrimination is not only wrong in principle, but is anti-competitive in nature. This abusive practice limits, or even denies, patient choice and access to a range of beneficial providers; and in general, results in a less than ideal and optimal delivery system. Additionally, ensuring that providers are not discriminated against in such fashion would help encourage the placement and location of a wide range of skilled healthcare professionals in those areas of our nation currently without sufficient numbers of health providers to adequately serve the public.

Specifically, your efforts to spearhead inclusion of "Non-Discrimination in Health Care" (Sec. 2706 – page 95/2074) in the pending Senate reform bill are especially appreciated. Additionally, your support for the successful retention, in the final legislative package to be enacted into law, of the provider non-discrimination provision, "State Prohibitions on Discrimination Against Health Care Providers" (Sec. 238 – Page 133/2016) contained in the House-passed reform bill, is also greatly appreciated by the coalition. Collectively, both of these important provisions would work to help eliminate the harmful practice of health plan discrimination against whole classes of healthcare providers. With your continued leadership and support, we trust both provisions will be successfully included in the final legislation that becomes law.

Once more, we applaud your effort and value the leadership you have exhibited in supporting these vital provisions. If we can assist you in any way regarding your efforts

to secure passage of Section 2706 in the Senate bill, and Section 238 of the House bill, please do not hesitate to call on our organizations for additional cooperation and support.

We look forward to our continued work with you to address the non-discrimination issue in a comprehensive way, ensuring all individuals receive the care they need and deserve.

Sincerely,

The Patients' Access to Responsible Care Alliance

- American Academy of Audiology
- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
- American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
- American Chiropractic Association
- American College of Nurse Midwives
- American Occupational Therapy Association
- American Optometric Association
- American Physical Therapy Association
- American Podiatric Medical Association
- American Psychological Association
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- National Association of Social Workers

PARCA is a coalition of organizations that represent the interests of millions of patients and non-MD/DO healthcare providers. It aims to provide federal policymakers with access to information from all areas of the healthcare community, in order to assist in the formulation of responsible, well-rounded healthcare policy. The coalition is committed to quality, cost-effective care, and ensuring patients have options in the delivery of such care.

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