

# ahca

## American Health Care Association

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Charles H. Roadman II, M.D.  
PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

June 13, 2003

The Honorable William M. Thomas  
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2208 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy L. Johnson  
Chairman, Health Subcommittee, Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2113 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Thomas and Chairman Johnson,

On behalf of 1.5 million frail, elderly and disabled Americans and the 2 million long term health care professionals who care for them, I am proud to offer the endorsement of the American Health Care Association to the "Prescription Drug and Medicare Modernization Act of 2003."

Your landmark bill will bring Medicare into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and begin the process of incorporating a more meaningful long term care benefit into the program.

In particular, AHCA would like to applaud your inclusion of extra assistance for the prescription drugs of low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities who are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid. Your bill recognizes the federal government's chief responsibility for the costs of the dual eligible population. As you know, more than 80 percent of Americans who require care in a nursing facility qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid benefits. Prescription drug benefits for these Americans are more appropriately funded by Medicare as opposed to Medicaid.

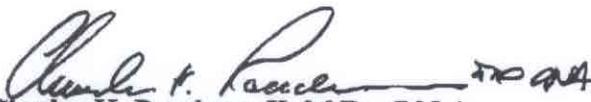
AHCA also strongly supports your bill's extension of the moratorium on the \$1,500 per year Part B outpatient therapy caps for another year. This policy would threaten patients by denying Medicare beneficiaries who have suffered strokes, broken hips, and other injuries, the physical, occupational and speech-language therapy they need to fully recover their health. The nation's oldest and most vulnerable Medicare beneficiaries are most impacted by the cap, as they are most likely to require more than \$1,500 in therapies each year. AHCA appreciates your powerful leadership on **this key beneficiary issue.**

The nation's long term care providers commend the common-sense regulatory reforms also included in your bill. It takes an average of nearly two years for the typical appeal of a nursing home inspection finding to make its way through the HHS Departmental Appeals Board. Your bill will ensure that these appeals are decided in a more timely manner, especially for those facilities facing termination of their Medicare contracts as a result of potentially invalid survey judgments.

Once again, I want to thank you both for your long standing advocacy on behalf of individuals who – because of social needs, disability or trauma – require services provided in a long term care setting.

The passage of your bill will be a remarkable victory for these vulnerable citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles H. Roadman II", followed by a small mark that looks like "to QA".

Charles H. Roadman II, M.D., C.N.A.  
President and CEO

CC: Jim Gomez, California Association of Health Care Facilities  
Toni Fatone, Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities