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June 16, 2003

The Honorable W.J. "Billy" Tauzin, Chairman  
Energy and Commerce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable William Thomas, Chairman  
Ways and Means Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Tauzin and Chairman Thomas:

I am writing on behalf of the 38,000 members of the American Society of Anesthesiologists to express our support for the physician payment provision of the Medicare reform legislation to be considered by your respective committees this week.

Confronted with a projected negative 4.2% adjustment in Medicare reimbursement for 2004, our members are most pleased by your proposal to mandate increases of at least 1.5% in each of 2004 and 2005. We believe that adoption of this proposal will provide considerable help in assuring continued access to necessary anesthesia services by Medicare beneficiaries.

We thank you both for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



James E. Cottrell, M.D.  
President

cc: Members of the U.S. House of Representatives