

SAMPLE SGR REPEAL LETTER

Below is a sample letter that neurosurgeons can use to write to your Senators and Representatives. It is merely an outline to get you started and you are highly encouraged to tailor this to your own practice and add personal information to make it more compelling.

Print the letter on your office or personal letterhead. The format for the inside address is as follows:

The Honorable [insert first and last name]
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable [insert first and last name]
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator [insert last name]/Representative [insert last name]:

I am a practicing neurosurgeon in [insert city and state] and I am writing to express my views regarding the sustainable growth rate (SGR) and ask you to support repeal of this Medicare physician reimbursement system.

As you know, due to the SGR, physicians treating our nation's seniors face significant cuts in Medicare payments over the next several years. The SGR has been universally viewed as fatally flawed since its inception, and there is bipartisan support to scrap this reimbursement system and replace it with one that will sustain the foundation of the Medicare program going into the future. In the past, Congress has repeatedly intervened to prevent similar cuts from going into effect; however these stop-gap measures have exacerbated the problem by increasing the severity of future cuts and making the cost of permanent Medicare payment reform more expensive.

As Congress wrestles with how best to reform the Medicare physician payment system, I encourage you to consider the following results from a national survey of neurosurgeons, which paint a troubling picture for seniors if drastic Medicare physician payment cuts continue.

- Patient access to care will be significantly affected as nearly forty percent of neurosurgeons will decrease the number of new Medicare patients they see and over eighteen percent will no longer take any new Medicare patients.
- Over fifty percent of neurosurgeons will stop providing certain services and nearly fifty-three percent will reduce the time they spend with Medicare patients.
- Nearly sixty percent of neurosurgeons are already reducing the number of Medicare patients in their practice due to low reimbursement and over two-thirds of neurosurgeons are now referring patients with complex problems, meaning many seniors now have to travel further to get the care they need.

These results really do paint a bleak path we are going down. It is therefore crucial that Congress pass legislation immediately to address the decline in Medicare payments so that we can alter this course. Most agree that a full repeal of the highly dysfunctional SGR is the only way to provide physician practices with financial stability and predictability to enable the infrastructure needed to care for their patients. I hope that you will seize the opportunity to accomplish this goal and **support legislation to repeal and replace the SGR.**

Thank you for considering my views. I am happy to speak directly with you or your staff about these and other healthcare issues at your convenience.

Sincerely,

[insert your name]