



For Immediate Release

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**AMA OUTRAGED AT SENATORS WHO PUT HEALTH INSURERS BEFORE
MEDICARE PATIENTS**

**Statement Attributable to: Nancy H. Nielsen, M.D.
President, American Medical Association**

“The physicians of America are outraged that a group of Republican senators followed the direction of the Bush Administration and voted to protect health insurance companies at the expense of America’s seniors, disabled and military families.

“These senators leave for their 4th of July picnics knowing that the most vulnerable Americans are at risk because of the Senate’s inability to act to stop drastic payment cuts for health care services that are needed by our Medicare and TRICARE patients.

“The House voted to preserve access to care for Medicare patients in a bipartisan landslide vote to pass H.R. 6331 by an overwhelming margin of 355 to 59. The House made seniors, the disabled and military families a top priority. The AMA appreciates the courage of the 59 Senators, including 9 Republicans, who voted to put patients ahead of partisan politics and vote for H.R. 6331.

“Today, thanks to some senators, we stand at the brink of a Medicare meltdown. On July 1 – just four days from now – the government will slash Medicare physician payments by 10.6 percent, forcing many physicians to make the difficult choice to limit the number of Medicare patients in their practices.

“The Senate must return from their recess and make seniors’ health care their top priority. For doctors, this is not a partisan issue - it’s a patient access issue.”

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