

## **Attention Medicare Patients**

Dear Patient:

I am writing you today to ask you to help stop something that could hurt your ability, and that of millions of your fellow Medicare beneficiaries, to obtain quality medical care.

The United States Congress is thinking of cutting payments for all Medicare health care providers by 26% from 2006-2011, including the 4.4% cut in physician reimbursement scheduled to take effect in January. These cuts would seriously weaken doctors' ability to continue treating patients on Medicare.

Since 1990, Medicare physician payment rates have fallen further and further behind the cost of running a medical practice. Today, Medicare pays your doctors about two-thirds what it costs to provide your care.

Physicians are the foundation of Medicare. We want to care for our senior patients and Floridians with disabilities. That is our calling. But any more cuts will force doctors to make heartbreaking decisions about how we practice medicine. These drastic proposed payment cuts could force many doctors to limit or stop taking new Medicare patients. Others would close some of their offices or put off buying important new equipment.

America's seniors and those with disabilities deserve a first-class Medicare program. I want to continue treating my Medicare patients. So do my fellow physicians. But these cuts truly would make it very hard for us to cover our overhead, pay our employees, and keep our offices open. We need your help.

Please call, write, or visit your U.S. representative or your U.S. senators, Bill Nelson and Mel Martinez, as soon as possible. Tell them you oppose any further cuts in Medicare reimbursements. It is very important to contact Senators Nelson and Martinez. Our friends in Washington tell us that the Senate is more likely to make deep cuts. The attached pages include a sample letter and all the numbers and addresses you need.

Your doctors need your help. Please help us preserve the type of health care system you and millions of other Florida seniors and people with disabilities deserve.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Bill Nelson  
United States Senate  
716 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-0903  
Telephone: (202) 224-5274

The Honorable Mel Martinez  
United States Senate  
317 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-0904  
Telephone: (202) 224-3041