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AND REFRACTIVE SURGERY

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July 24, 2007

The Honorable John Dingell  
Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS), an international, educational, and scientific organization whose nearly 10,000 member ophthalmologists specialize in cataract and refractive surgery, we want to express our thanks for your leadership in developing H.R. 3162, the Children's Health and Medicare Protection (CHAMP) Act of 2007 that will ensure access to health care for our nation's children and Medicare beneficiaries.

We appreciate the willingness of you and your staff to listen and understand the Medicare reimbursement issues facing our membership and commend you for your commitment to the enactment of Medicare physician payment reform legislation that repeals the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula; prevents the scheduled 9.9% reduction in physician payments in 2008; and ensures that all physicians receive a positive reimbursement update of at least .5% in 2008 and 2009. We also understand that further legislation will be needed to avert reductions in 2010 and beyond and to develop an effective update payment system in the future.

In addition, we also understand that the CHAMP Act would prospectively remove physician administered drugs from the physician expenditure target and treat new coverage decisions as a change in law and regulation. These are two key changes to the system that have been long advocated by ASCRS. Therefore, we support your legislation, H.R.3162, the CHAMP Act of 2007 and look forward to working with you to achieve passage of this important legislation.

Once again, we appreciate your commitment to this issue, and your willingness to work with the physician community. ASCRS remains committed to strengthening the Medicare program and ensuring continued access to quality health care for our beneficiaries.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Lindstrom  
President