



NEWS RELEASE

1090 Vermont Ave., Ste. 510 Washington, D.C. 20005 **ph** 202 414 0140 | 800 962 9008
fax 202 544 3525 | www.osteopathic.org | do-online.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 27, 2007

Contact: Leann Fox
Director of Washington Advocacy
& Communications
800/962-9008 ext 225
(202) 256-1417 Cell
lfox@osteopathic.org

AOA Supports Elimination of Barriers to Quality Care in Rural and Underserved Areas Applauds Introduction of Health Care Access and Rural Equity Act (H-CARE) of 2007

(Washington, DC) – On Wednesday, June 27th the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) joined with Reps. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND) and Greg Walden (R-OR) as well as members of the House Rural Health Care Coalition and the House Rural Caucus to reintroduce the “Health Care Access and Rural Equity (H-CARE) Act of 2007,” which focuses on eliminating access to care barriers in rural and underserved areas of the country.

“The osteopathic profession has a long history of providing care to patients in rural and underserved areas. The H-CARE Act of 2007 follows that philosophy by attempting to address barriers to quality healthcare and addressing the unique characteristics of health care delivery in rural areas and assisting rural health care physicians in their efforts to continue to provide quality care to rural Americans,” said Peter Ajluni, D.O., President of the AOA. “On behalf of the 59,000 osteopathic physicians represented by the AOA, I would like to extend our appreciation to Congressmen Pomeroy and Walden for introducing this important legislation.”

Rural Americans face unique barriers to care not found in urban areas. From traveling hours to the nearest health care clinic, to significant shortages of physicians, to inadequate reimbursement rates for those physicians practicing in rural areas. Even now, access to care continues to be a challenge for those living and providing care in rural communities. The H-CARE Act contains numerous provisions supported by the AOA, including provisions that would ensure that the work of all physicians, regardless of the geographic location of their practice, is compensated in an equitable manner.

The AOA believes that the provisions included in the H-CARE Act are important to ensuring that rural communities have stable and functioning health care systems.

“The AOA is committed to ensuring that patients in rural areas such as McLean, North Dakota have the same access to care as patients in McLean, Virginia,” said Dr. Ajluni. “The H-CARE Act deserves consideration by the House of Representatives as soon as possible.”

###

The American Osteopathic Association proudly represents over 59,000 osteopathic physicians (D.O.s) practicing in 31 specialties and subspecialties, promotes public health, encourages scientific research, serves as the primary certifying body for D.O.s and is the accrediting agency for all osteopathic medical schools and health care facilities. More information on D.O.s/osteopathic medicine can be found at www.osteopathic.org.