



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

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The Honorable Tom Coburn
United States Senate
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Coburn:

On behalf of the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), I would like to express support for your proposal to strengthen and reform Medicare, The Seniors' Choice Act.

The AAOS believes that the Medicare program needs fundamental reform because of its impending financial crisis which threatens patient access to medical care. To achieve Medicare solvency, the AAOS believes that policymakers must undertake a thorough review of all program components, including health care delivery and benefits, payments to providers, and initiatives to contain costs. The Seniors' Choice Act offers a comprehensive set of reforms that would help accomplish these goals.

The proposal reflects AAOS policy on a number of issues including repeal of the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) and freezing physician payment levels until the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula can be replaced. It also includes out-of-pocket protection against significant medical expenses, premium support, increasing cost-sharing for wealthier seniors, increasing the age of eligibility for participating in Medicare, reducing the subsidy for Medicare Part B premiums for high-income beneficiaries and requiring millionaires to pay the full cost of Parts B and D premiums. Finally, it allows people to continue in a traditional government-run Medicare plan if they so chose.

The AAOS applauds your efforts and we believe that patients will benefit from your proposal. It is an excellent blueprint as we move forward with efforts to improve and reform Medicare.

Sincerely,

John R. Tongue, MD
President
American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons