

September 20, 2004

The Honorable Joe Barton  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Dingell  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2322 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act**

Dear Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member:

On July 22, 2004, the Senate amended and passed by unanimous consent H.R. 663, the “Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act,” which the House of Representatives passed on March 12, 2003, by a vote of 418-6. **The undersigned organizations strongly urge that the necessary steps be taken to move H.R. 663 so it can be enacted this month.** It is critical that we do not miss this opportunity to improve patient safety.

There is broad agreement among leading patient safety experts and institutions that our health care system needs to transform the existing culture of blame and punishment that suppresses information about errors into a culture focused on patient safety and quality improvement. H.R. 663 would significantly advance an environment in which health care professionals and organizations can report and analyze health care errors and share their experiences with others in order to prevent similar occurrences. H.R. 663 would achieve this without jeopardizing the regulatory and oversight functions of state and federal governments, or patients’ rights to information relating to their care.

Our collective memberships represent a broad array of interests and perspectives on the issue of health care. We speak in unison, however, on the critical need to improve patient safety and quality. We believe that the benefits of improving patient safety and quality in our nation’s health care system are too compelling not to achieve an effective reporting system without delay. By enacting H.R. 663, we can promote patient safety and quality by ensuring that errors are systematically reported and analyzed—so they won’t happen again. **We strongly urge you to promptly move H.R. 663 to advance patient safety.**

Respectfully,

Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy  
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Ophthalmology  
American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
American Academy of Physician Assistants  
American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists

American Association of Clinical Urologists  
American Association of Electrodiagnostic Medicine  
American College of Chest Physicians  
American College of Gastroenterology  
American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine  
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American College of Radiology Association  
American College of Rheumatology  
American College of Surgeons  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Health Care Association  
American Hospital Association  
American Medical Association  
American Medical Directors Association  
American Medical Group Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Pharmacists Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Society for Reproductive Medicine  
American Society of Addiction Medicine  
American Society of Anesthesiologists  
American Society of General Surgeons  
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists  
American Society Nephrology  
American Society of Plastic Surgeons  
American Thoracic Society  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Catholic Health Partners  
Child Neurology Society  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Institute for Safe Medication Practices  
Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations  
Joint Council of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology  
Marshfield Clinic  
Medical Group Management Association  
National Association for Medical Direction of Respiratory Care  
National Patient Safety Foundation  
Partnership for Patient Safety  
Premier, Inc.  
Renal Physicians Association  
Society for Vascular Surgery  
Society of Critical Care Medicine

Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Hospital Medicine  
Society of Interventional Radiology  
The Endocrine Society  
Trinity Health of Novi, Michigan  
U.S. Pharmacopeia  
VHA, Inc.

Alaska State Medical Association  
Arizona Medical Association  
Arkansas Medical Society  
California Medical Association  
Colorado Medical Society  
Connecticut State Medical Society  
Medical Society of Delaware  
Medical Society of the District of Columbia  
Florida Medical Association  
Idaho Medical Association  
Illinois State Medical Society  
Indiana State Medical Association  
Iowa Medical Society  
Maine Medical Association  
Maryland State Medical Society  
Massachusetts Medical Society  
Michigan State Medical Society  
Minnesota Medical Association  
Missouri State Medical Association  
Montana Medical Association  
Nebraska Medical Association  
New Hampshire Medical Society  
Medical Society of New Jersey  
New Mexico Medical Society  
Medical Society of the State of New York  
North Carolina Medical Society  
North Dakota Medical Association  
Ohio State Medical Association  
Oklahoma State Medical Association  
Oregon Medical Association  
Pennsylvania Medical Society  
Rhode Island Medical Society  
South Dakota State Medical Association  
Tennessee Medical Association  
Texas Medical Association  
Utah Medical Association  
Vermont Medical Society  
Washington State Medical Association  
West Virginia State Medical Association