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NEWS RELEASE

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AOA Applauds House for Approval of Long-Term Fix to Flawed SGR Formula

(Washington, DC) – The American Osteopathic Association (AOA), and the 67,000 osteopathic physicians it represents, congratulates the House of Representatives for passing the “Medicare Physician Payment Reform Act” (H.R. 3961). We applaud and sincerely thank the 243 Members who took an essential step towards preserving access to health care services for Medicare beneficiaries.

This policy represents one of the AOA’s top legislative priorities. For the past decade, the AOA has advocated for the permanent repeal of the systemically flawed sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula. H.R. 3961 establishes a fair and equitable payment system for physicians that recognizes the value of primary care and preventive services and removes barriers to access to care for patients.

Over the past eight years, physician payment policies, specifically the SGR, have eroded physicians’ confidence in and acceptance of the Medicare program and decreased beneficiaries’ access to health care. We remain appreciative of the Congressional intervention over this time, but those interventions have created a policy crisis that is less than 50 days from realization. Permanent and decisive action, in our opinion, is the only reasonable course of action – and the House of Representatives agreed.

Physicians are the foundation of our nation’s health care system. We believe that the goals of health care reform legislation are more likely to be successful with the enactment of this comprehensive overhaul of the Medicare physician payment system. Together, osteopathic physicians and the United States Congress can work together to ensure the preservation of the patient-physician relationship and patient access to quality care.

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The American Osteopathic Association proudly represents more than 67,000 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.