



## AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

*Inspiring Quality:  
Highest Standards, Better Outcomes*

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The Honorable Ron Wyden  
United States Senate  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo  
United States Senate  
239 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

July 22, 2013

Dear Senator Wyden and Senator Crapo:

On behalf of the more than 79,000 members of the American College of Surgeons, I write to express the College's support for the Ambulatory Surgical Center Quality and Access Act of 2013 (S. 1137), which would preserve and improve patient access to ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs) as a cost effective option for surgical care.

While ASCs and hospital outpatient departments (HOPD) are both appropriate sites for the provision of many surgical procedures, Medicare typically reimburses ASCs at only a fraction of the amount paid to HOPDs for identical services. Unfortunately, the inequity continues to grow each year because of the differing ways in which Medicare payment updates for ASCs and HOPDs are calculated. To stop the growth of this inequity, S. 1137 would update future Medicare payments to ASCs using the same market basket update used to adjust Medicare payments to HOPDs.

The legislation would also reward ASCs that provide the highest quality surgical care through implementation of a value-based purchasing (VBP) program for ASCs. The College's own experience has shown that a commitment to quality improvement not only produces better outcomes for patients but that it can also yield savings for providers, patients, and for the health care system as a whole. Incentivizing the provision of high quality care in the ambulatory setting has the potential to improve outcomes and produce savings that could help curb rising costs in Medicare.

The College is pleased to offer our support for the Ambulatory Surgical Center Quality and Access Act. We appreciate your commitment to improving patient access to high quality surgical care and we look forward to working with you to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

David B. Hoyt, MD, FACS  
Executive Director