



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

Inspiring Quality:

Highest Standards, Better Outcomes

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The Honorable Devin Nunes
U.S. House of Representatives
1013 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Larson
U.S. House of Representatives
1501 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 22, 2013

Dear Congressman Nunes and Congressman Larson:

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 (H.R. 2500), 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, H.R. 2500 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