

August 15, 2009

Dear _____:

The Medical Group Management Association of St. Louis (MGMA) is concerned with the Affordable Health Care Choices Act (HR 3200). The MGMA believes "HR 3200 must have important revisions before it can earn full support." The MSMA outlined (number 1 through 4) the following concerns and MGMA supports their efforts:

- 1) must maintain the core principles of freedom of choice for patients
- 2) must maintain the freedom of practice for physicians
- 3) must provide a permanent fix to the physician payment model
- 4) must address professional liability problems in addition to appropriate insurance reform

It is essential that patients have freedom of choice whether the government or an independent entity maintains health care coverage. The federal government must review this basic right as it infringes on civil liberties.

Physicians have a stake in their ability to practice independently without stringent regulations that dictate products/services. It is imperative that these rights be observed while developing public policy and those physicians are given the freedom to practice.

The proposed cuts in reimbursement would cripple practices; St. Louis practices operate using a lean business model. The proposed cuts would mean additional job losses in an economy that is teetering on recession/recovery. We ask that the formula be reevaluated and there be a permanent fix to the physician payment model.

Reform should eliminate inflating professional liability costs and the process in which premium hikes are given to physicians. Hikes in premiums and frivolous lawsuits need to be evaluated. It is imperative that tort reform for health care providers becomes reality.

Health insurance companies unjustly withhold and delay funds. They refuse coverage for preexisting conditions and other factors. Health care reform should consider inappropriate policies implemented by health insurance companies.

Sincerely,
