



**JAMES L. MADARA, MD**  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CEO

ama-assn.org  
t (312) 464-5000

May 3, 2017

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
United States Senate  
511 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
United States Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Cantwell and Grassley:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express our support for S. 497, the “Lymphedema Treatment Act.” This bill would help fill a treatment gap for patients with lymphedema by providing for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as durable medical equipment (DME) items.

Lymphedema afflicts millions of Americans, with the majority of cases caused by cancer treatments that damage the body’s lymph transport and immune functions. When left untreated or under-treated, lymphedema is progressive and can put patients at greater risk for serious infections or other costly complications. While certain treatments for breast cancer-related lymphedema are required by law to be covered by private insurance plans, Medicare beneficiaries with lymphedema currently lack coverage for compression therapy, an essential component of care they must use to manage their chronic disease. As a result, many patients are not receiving appropriate and evidence-based treatment, which results in a decline in their health status and quality of life. Your bill would fix this treatment gap by specifically covering certain lymphedema compression treatment items under Medicare as DME items as long as they are prescribed by a physician or non-physician health professional to the extent authorized under state law.

The AMA applauds your leadership in sponsoring the Lymphedema Treatment Act and is pleased to support this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James L. Madara". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James L. Madara, MD