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July 16, 2015

The Honorable George Holding
United States House of Representatives
507 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Holding:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express support for H.R. 2568, the "Fair Medical Audits Act of 2015," and your efforts to improve the transparency and fairness of the Medicare audit program.

The AMA strongly believes that one of the fundamental reasons for the current two-year Medicare appeals backlog is the Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) and other audit programs. Based on data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the experience of many physicians, RAC auditors are often wrong and their sometimes aggressive tactics have caused physician practices undue hardship and expense. Your legislation would help to address this issue by establishing incentives for RACs to make more accurate audit findings, raising qualification standards for auditors, and increasing educational efforts to help physicians avoid common mistakes. The AMA strongly supports delaying RAC payments until claims are subject to external review by an Administrative Law Judge and reducing the look-back period for RAC audits. H.R. 2568 would help achieve the audit program's vital goal of combatting and eliminating Medicare fraud, while ensuring long-overdue administrative relief and due process to healthcare providers so that they can focus on patient care.

We appreciate all your work on this important issue and look forward to continuing to work with you to advance this legislation and improve the audit process.

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