

THANK YOU!
Congress Averts 2007 Physician Payment Cuts!

Over this past weekend, the House and Senate voted to eliminate the impending 5 percent Medicare physician payment cuts slated for Jan. 1, 2007. The legislation would provide a zero percent update for 2007, as well as a 1.5 percent incentive payment to physicians who report on quality measures beginning July 1, 2007 through Dec. 31, 2007.

While the legislation does not reverse the drastic and arbitrary imaging cuts included in last year's Deficit Reduction Act, the passage of this legislation allows many physicians to avoid dramatic payment reductions next year and buys the physician community needed time to work with lawmakers to find a permanent solution to the flawed physician payment formula.

Our success would not have occurred without the help of everyone in the cardiovascular community who invested tremendous time and energy in ensuring that lawmakers made stopping the cuts a priority before the New Year. In the last month alone, more than 5,000 calls and emails were generated by ACC members to lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

Congress is clearly hearing our message but our work is far from done. Moving into 2007, we must continue our grassroots momentum. Over the next few weeks, I strongly urge each and every member of the cardiovascular community to take a few moments to thank lawmakers who voted for the payment fix. I also urge you to continue to engage your members of Congress and compel them to find a long-term solution to the payment problem. We must ensure that the 110th Congress makes this issue a priority. A sample "Thank You" letter is available on the ACC's CardioAdvocacy Network (CAN) Web site at www.acc.org/CAN.

Thank you again for all of your hard work. The results of this past week are proof that working together we can make a difference!

Sincerely,
Steve Nissen, M.D., F.A.C.C.
ACC President

P.S. It's also essential that you take advantage of the opportunities provided by the ACC's CardioAdvocacy Network (CAN) and the ACC Political Action Committee (PAC). Both programs are great ways to stay up-to-date on legislative issues and to influence congressional leaders. More information can be found at www.acc.org, under "Advocacy," or by contacting Frank Ryan (fryan@acc.org) or Molly Nicholson (mnichels@acc.org).