



American  
Clinical Laboratory  
Association

June 23, 2008

The Honorable Charlie Rangel  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rangel:

On behalf of the members of the American Clinical Laboratory Association (ACLA), I am writing to express our strong support for H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008. H.R. 6331 contains a number of provisions of keen interest to ACLA members, in particular the repeal of the Medicare competitive bidding demonstration project for clinical laboratory services mandated by the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003. H.R. 6331 also extends for 18 months the so-called "TC grandfather clause" which allows independent clinical laboratories to bill Medicare directly for the technical component of surgical pathology services provided to hospital patients, and averts the 10.1% cut in Medicare physician fees that otherwise would occur on July 1.

ACLA has fought the competitive bidding project from its inception because it would impose unworkable requirements, ignore the complexity of laboratory services and the differences in types of tests and laboratories and jeopardize access to and quality of care for Medicare beneficiaries. We are gratified that you share our concerns. Extending the "TC grandfather clause" insures the uninterrupted provision of pathology services to hospital patients, particularly those served by rural hospitals. Finally, by providing a needed increase in physician payments for Medicare services, H.R. 6331 will strengthen beneficiary access to those services.

Thank you for your leadership on these issues of critical importance to insuring continued beneficiary access to quality laboratory and physician services. We look forward to working with you and your staff to enact H.R. 6331.

Sincerely,

Alan Mertz,  
President