



March 5, 2007

**VIA FACSIMILE**

The Honorable Ben Nelson  
The Honorable Jim Bunning  
United State Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**RE: Preserving Patient Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation**

Dear Senators Nelson and Bunning:

The undersigned members of the Coalition to Preserve Rehabilitation (“CPR”) write to state our strong support for S. 543, the “Preserving Patient Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation Hospitals Act of 2007.” This legislation will help ensure that individuals in need of intensive inpatient rehabilitation services will have access to appropriate treatment.

CPR is a coalition of national consumer and clinician organizations with the goal of preserving access to appropriate rehabilitation services so that individuals with disabilities, injuries, or chronic conditions may regain and/or maintain their maximum level of independent function.

Inpatient rehabilitation is often essential to individuals with disabilities, illnesses and injuries who require intensive rehabilitative care to regain and/or maintain their ability to function. The determination of one’s rehabilitative needs is an extremely personal process involving the individual, their family, and their team of rehabilitation doctors and other clinicians. It is not a decision that should be dictated by a government policy based on diagnosis alone.

Unfortunately, Medicare’s so-called “75 Percent Rule” is currently requiring arbitrary judgments about who is admitted to intensive rehabilitation and who is diverted into nursing homes and other less intensive settings. The impact of this restriction is essentially a quota system where bureaucratic rules, not the medical judgments of clinicians, decide which individuals have access to inpatient rehabilitation.

The 75 Percent Rule not only prevents individuals with certain diagnoses from receiving vital inpatient rehabilitative care, but threatens the capacity of the inpatient rehabilitation system to treat the growing number of individuals in need of intensive rehabilitation services to maximize favorable outcomes and a return to independent living.

S. 543 would lessen the negative impact of Medicare's 75 Percent Rule by freezing the current threshold at 60% rather than increasing it to 75 percent. This would allow inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units greater flexibility to assess who is admitted by placing emphasis on the specific medical and rehabilitation needs of each individual patient.

Thank you for your commitment to this issue and we look forward to working with you toward enactment of this important legislation. If you have any questions, please contact us at (202) 329-4290.

Sincerely,

*American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists*

*American Association of People with Disabilities*

*ACCSES-DSPA Alliance*

*Amputee Coalition of America*

*American Occupational Therapy Association*

*American Physical Therapy Association*

*American Therapeutic Recreation Association*

*Association of Academic Physiatrists*

*Brain Injury Association of America*

*Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.*

*Christopher Reeve Foundation*

*Easter Seals*

*Epilepsy Foundation*

*Goodwill Industries International, Inc.*

*National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics*

*National Association of Social Workers*

*National Council on Independent Living*

*National Multiple Sclerosis Society*

*National Spinal Cord Injury Association*

*National Stroke Association*

*Paralyzed Veterans of America*

*The Arc of the United States*

*United Cerebral Palsy*

*United Spinal Association*

