

May 2009

The Honorable Blanche L. Lincoln
US Senate
355 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Olympia J. Snowe
US Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Lincoln and Snowe:

On behalf of the undersigned national organizations, we applaud your leadership and commitment to health by introducing the “Medicare Fracture Prevention and Osteoporosis Testing Act” (S. 769). As you know, it is vitally important that patients continue to have access to care that supports bone health services. Thanks to your leadership, we have a chance to increase the number of screenings and decrease the number of individuals with osteoporosis in the U.S. by reversing the cuts to dual energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) and vertebral fracture assessment (VFA) reimbursements.

The effect that osteoporosis and its related fractures have on the U.S. healthcare system is staggering, accounting for approximately 300,000 hip fracture hospitalizations and costing more than \$18 billion per year. Therefore, it is vitally important that patients continue to have access to services that support bone health, including DXA and VFA, that measure bone mass and predict fracture risk. At a time when 61 million people in the U.S. are projected to have osteoporosis and low bone mass by 2020, it is critical that the nation maintain and preserve its capacity to treat this costly, debilitating and growing health disorder.

Thank you, Senators Lincoln and Snowe, for recognizing the importance of prevention and early detection of bone fractures and osteoporosis. We fully support your efforts to maintain patient access to DXA and VFA services and strongly endorse the “Medicare Fracture Prevention Osteoporosis Testing Act.” Thank you for your commitment to the nation’s health.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Aging Research
American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists
American Bone Health
American College of Nurse Midwives
American College of Rheumatology
American Medical Women's Association
American Orthopaedic Association
American Society of Bone and Mineral Research
Assisted Living Federation of America
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses

Black Women's Health Imperative
Coalition of Labor Union Women
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
Foundation for Osteoporosis Research and Education
International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Council of Women's Organizations
National Medical Association
National Osteoporosis Foundation
Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation
RetireSafe
Society for Women's Health Research
The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
The Endocrine Society
The International Society for Clinical Densitometry
The Paget Foundation for Paget's Disease of Bone and Related Disorders
The Resource Center
U.S. Bone and Joint Decade
Women in Government
Women's Research and Education Institute