

UPDATE

# neurosurgery

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **State and National Medical Societies Join Forces to Oppose Senator Reid's Health Reform Bill**

*Message to Congress: Slow Down and Get It Right for Our Patients' Sake*

(Washington, DC) –Tens of thousands of physicians in America, who are deeply concerned over the direction of health reform legislation, have joined forces to deliver a strong message to Congress: it's not too late to get it right; slow down and change course. These 17 state and national medical societies, including the [American Association of Neurological Surgeons](#) (AANS) and [Congress of Neurological Surgeons](#) (CNS), represent more than 92,000 physicians from coast to coast, and are unified in their opposition of the "[Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act](#)" (H.R. 3590) as introduced by [Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid](#). The groups, along with three past presidents of the [American Medical Association](#), this week sent an urgent [letter](#) to the U.S. Senate specifying their numerous concerns with Senator Reid's bill, which is now being debated. **Altogether, more than 40 state, county and national medical societies – representing nearly a half-million physicians – now publicly oppose the Senate health reform bill.**

"We hope that by speaking with this unified voice, which represents thousands of the nation's doctors, that our chorus of opposition will finally be heard on the floor of the Senate loud and clear," states **Troy M. Tippet, MD**, President of the AANS. "We are urging the Senate to draft a more targeted bill that will reform the country's flawed system for financing healthcare, while preserving the best healthcare in the world. We absolutely support reform, but not this reform; the direction we're now heading in is terrifying and heartbreaking for this and future generations of Americans. Right now, Congress is trying to fix a broken system with a broken remedy."

In their letter, the groups stated that while their organizations strongly believe that continuing on with the status quo is not acceptable, the shifting to the federal government of so much control over medical decisions is not justified and is harmful. "We are united in our resolve to achieve health system reform that empowers patients and preserves the practice of medicine -- without creating a huge, unnecessary government bureaucracy," exclaims **Gerald E. Rodts, MD**, President of the CNS. "Together, this coalition is urging lawmakers to take a step back, revisit the broken elements of our current system and reevaluate the best options to fix them, and then change the direction of their reform efforts accordingly. It is vital that we get this right for our patients and our profession."

The groups point to a number of problems with H.R. 3590, including:

- The bill **undermines the patient-physician relationship** and empowers the federal government with even greater authority.
- The bill is **unsustainable** from a financial standpoint.
- The government run **community health insurance option** eventually will lead to a single-payer, government run healthcare system.
- Largely unchecked by Congress or the courts, the federal government would have unprecedented authority to change the Medicare program through the new **Independent Medicare Advisory Board** and the new Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation.
- The bill is **devoid of real medical liability reform measures** that reduce costs in proven demonstrable ways.
- The **right of patient and physicians to privately contract** for health services is not guaranteed in the bill.

For more information on the position of AANS and CNS on healthcare reform issues, visit:

[http://www.aans.org/legislative/aans/Neuro\\_HealthCareReform.asp](http://www.aans.org/legislative/aans/Neuro_HealthCareReform.asp) or  
<http://www.cns.org/advocacy/wc/nsHealthcareReform.aspx>.

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*The **American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS)**, founded in 1931, and the **Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS)**, founded in 1951, are the two largest scientific and educational associations for neurosurgical professionals in the world. These groups represent approximately 7,600 neurosurgeons worldwide. Neurological surgery is the medical specialty concerned with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of disorders that affect the entire nervous system, including the spinal column, spinal cord, brain and peripheral nerves. For more information, please visit [www.aans.org](http://www.aans.org) or [www.cns.org](http://www.cns.org).*

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