



**AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
OTOLARYNGOLOGY—  
HEAD AND NECK SURGERY**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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For Immediate Release:

December 14, 2011

**AAO-HNS Applauds U.S. House Action to Prevent Medicare Physician Payment Cut**  
*Ear, Nose, Throat, Head and Neck (ENT) Surgeons Encourage Final Passage*

**Alexandria, Va.** – The American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS), representing nearly 12,000 of America’s ENT surgeons, commends the U.S. House of Representatives for taking action to halt the 27.4 percent cut in Medicare physician payments scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2012. Providers and patients within the Medicare system need stability to ensure a dynamic physician workforce remains available for the nation’s senior population.

“The existing Medicare physician payment system, driven by the flawed Sustainable Growth Rate formula, is broken,” stated AAO-HNS Executive Vice President/CEO David R. Nielsen, MD, “and efforts must be made in earnest to develop a new model that will provide timely and fair payments to physicians providing quality care within the Medicare system. Despite the dire need for the development of a new payment system, Congressional action must occur now to prevent the most immediate concern – the January 1 cut. A payment cut of such magnitude would have a catastrophic effect on an already crippled system and would exacerbate existing access to care issues.”

While the AAO-HNS recognizes the proposed legislation (H.R. 3630) is not without flaw, we encourage the U.S. Senate to support its continued advancement and urge the Administration to withdraw its veto threat. With only weeks left in the year and no known alternatives, now is not the time to allow partisan politics to further damage the Medicare system by leaving physicians without the ability to thoughtfully manage their patients and practices in 2012.

For more information about AAO-HNS federal legislative priorities, please contact [legfederal@entnet.org](mailto:legfederal@entnet.org).

***About the AAO-HNS***

*The American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (www.entnet.org), one of the oldest medical associations in the nation, represents nearly 12,000 physicians and allied health professionals who specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the ears, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck. The Academy serves its members by facilitating the advancement of the science and art of medicine related to otolaryngology and by representing the specialty in governmental and socioeconomic issues. The organization’s vision: “Empowering otolaryngologist-head and neck surgeons to deliver the best patient care.”*

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