

# PARCA

*Ensuring Patients' Access to Care*

June 5, 2007

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of over 800,000 physicians and other healthcare professionals from across the country and the millions of patients they serve, the PARCA Coalition opposes HR 2260 introduced by Congressman John Sullivan (R-OK). A similar bill was introduced in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress and our concerns remain the same; sanctions against misleading statements regarding credentials, training, or skills should apply equally to all healthcare professionals, including medical doctors and osteopathic physicians.

The primary concern of the PARCA coalition is to ensure the greatest access to high quality care. In contrast, HR 2260 does a disservice to all consumers by being misleading. Commercial fraud and misrepresentation are already prohibited by laws enforced by the Federal government and the statutes of all 50 States, territories and the District of Columbia. These laws apply to healthcare. It is also already illegal in every state, and enforced by federal and state law authorities, for any person or entity to identify or position themselves as being able to practice any of the professions where a license is required, without holding that license. How healthcare professionals participating in the Medicare program represent themselves is governed by Medicare conditions of participation. Further, healthcare professionals who misrepresent their credentials and licensure put at grave risk their state licensure and their ability to earn a living.

HR 2260 expressly excludes any person who is “a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathic medicine” from the legislation’s prohibitions from and sanctions against making “any deceptive or misleading act...” While we believe these are redundant sanctions against misleading statements, they should apply equally to everyone.

HR 2260 appears to undermine the legitimate education and training of other healthcare professionals and, rather than enlighten the public, would create further confusion among consumers – and would likely limit access to care. Patients benefit by having greater and easier access to a wide range of healthcare services performed by the healthcare professionals educated, trained, and licensed to perform those said services. HR 2260 would have a chilling effect on access to all healthcare professionals.

PARCA agrees that individuals who are not qualified and/or not appropriately licensed to provide healthcare services should not be permitted to serve patients. However, HR 2260 will only create confusion for consumers and may even limit the availability of care.

PARCA urges you to oppose HR 2260.

## **Who We Are**

### **American Academy of Audiology**

The American Academy of Audiology is the world's largest professional organization of audiologists. The active membership of more than 10,000 audiologists join together to provide the highest quality of hearing healthcare service to children and adults described by our national slogan "Caring for America's Hearing."

### **American Academy of Nurse Practitioners**

Formed in 1985, the AANP is the largest and only full-service professional membership organization in the United States for NPs of all specialties. AANP has steadily expanded services to meet its mission to promote excellence in NP practice, education and research, advance health policy for access to high quality, cost effective healthcare for all, serve as a resource for NPs, the healthcare community and consumers and be a leader in the national and global community.

### **American Association of Nurse Anesthetists**

Founded in 1931, the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) is the professional association for more than 36,000 Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) and student nurse anesthetists. CRNAs are advanced practice nurses who administer more than 27 million anesthetics in the United States each year. CRNAs practice in every setting in which anesthesia is delivered: traditional hospital surgical suites and obstetrical delivery rooms; critical access hospitals; ambulatory surgical centers; the offices of dentists, podiatrists, ophthalmologists, plastic surgeons, and pain management specialists; and U.S. military, Public Health Services, and Department of Veterans Affairs healthcare facilities.

### **American Chiropractic Association**

The American Chiropractic Association (ACA), based in Arlington, VA, is the largest professional association in the world representing doctors of chiropractic. The ACA provides lobbying, public relations, professional and educational opportunities for doctors of chiropractic, funds research regarding chiropractic and health issues, and offers leadership for the advancement of the profession. With approximately 18,000 members, the ACA promotes the highest standards of ethics and patient care, contributing to the health and well-being of millions of chiropractic patients.

### **American College of Nurse Midwives**

With roots dating to 1929, the American College of Nurse-Midwives is the oldest women's health care association in the U.S. ACNM's mission is to promote the health and well-being of women and newborns within their families and communities through the development and support of the profession of midwifery as practiced by certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives. Midwives believe every individual has the right to safe, satisfying health care with respect for human dignity and cultural variations. More information about ACNM can be found at [www.midwife.org](http://www.midwife.org).

### **American Occupational Therapy Association**

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is the nationally recognized professional association of over 36,000 occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and students of occupational therapy. AOTA seeks to advance the quality, availability, use, and support of occupational therapy (OT) through standard-setting, advocacy, education, and research on behalf of its members and the public. OT practitioners work with people who have experienced a disease, illness, injury, or disability and work to help them regain, develop, and build skills that are essential for independent functioning, health, and well-being.

### **American Optometric Association**

The American Optometric Association is the premier authority in the optometric profession. With more than 34,000 members in 6,500 U.S. communities, the AOA leads the way in its mission of improving the quality and availability of eye and vision care everywhere. Founded in 1898, the AOA is a federation of state, student and armed forces optometric associations. Through these affiliations, the AOA serves members consisting of optometrists, students of optometry, paraoptometric assistants and technicians. Together, the AOA and its affiliates work to provide the public with quality vision and eye care. Through offices in St. Louis, Missouri, and metropolitan Washington, D.C., the AOA sets professional standards, helps its members conduct patient care efficiently and effectively; lobbies government and other organizations on behalf of the optometric profession; and provides research and education leadership.

### **American Physical Therapy Association**

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) is a national professional organization representing almost 70,000 members. Its goal is to foster advancements in physical therapy practice, research, and education. The mission of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) is to further the profession's role in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of movement dysfunctions and the enhancement of the physical health and functional abilities of members of the public.

### **American Podiatric Medical Association**

Located in Bethesda, Maryland, the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) through its staff of 57 professionals and 11,500 podiatric physician members, is dedicated to promoting professional excellence in foot and ankle health care. Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (DPMs) are recognized as physicians and surgeons who serve the needs of the public through treatment of the lower extremities. The preparatory education of DPMs includes four years of undergraduate study, four years in accredited podiatric medical colleges affiliated with academic health centers, and 2 to 3 years in hospital or clinical residency programs that focus on both surgical and non-surgical medical treatment of the foot and ankle.

### **American Psychological Association**

Based in Washington, DC, the American Psychological Association (APA) is a scientific and professional organization that represents psychology in the United States and Canada. With 150,000 members, APA is the largest association of psychologists worldwide. The objectives of the American Psychological Association shall be to advance psychology as a science and profession and as a means of promoting health, education, and human welfare.

### **American Speech-Language-Hearing Association**

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the professional, scientific, and credentialing association for more than 127,000 members and affiliates who are speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists in the United States and internationally. The mission of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association is to promote the interests of and provide the highest quality services for professionals in audiology, speech-language pathology, and speech and hearing science, and to advocate for people with communication disabilities.

### **National Association of Social Workers**

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, with 150,000 members. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards, and to advance sound social policies.

For more information, contact [PARCAGroup@yahoo.com](mailto:PARCAGroup@yahoo.com)