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July 27, 2005

The Honorable Mike Crapo
United States Senate
239 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Crapo:

The American Hospital Association (AHA), on behalf of our 4,800 member hospitals and health systems, and our 33,000 individual members, is pleased to support S.1440, the Pulmonary and Cardiac Rehabilitation Act of 2005. We applaud your effort to make pulmonary and cardiac rehabilitation services available as a covered Medicare benefit for America's seniors.

We especially appreciate the legislative language that establishes a statutory benefit category under Medicare for cardiac rehabilitation services. We believe that the legislation goes a long way toward clarifying the items and services that comprise cardiac rehabilitation programs, as well as an appropriate level of physician supervision and involvement.

Cardiac rehabilitation has long been recognized as integral to the comprehensive management of patients with cardiovascular disease. These services are physician-driven and implemented by a team of highly trained health care professionals, including nurses, exercise physiologists, dietitians, health educators, behavioral medicine specialists, and others. Many scientific studies demonstrate that cardiac rehabilitation is an effective therapy that can improve the clinical course of coronary heart disease.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues toward the enactment of S.1440.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President

