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March 26, 2007

The Honorable Michael C. Burgess, MD
United States House of Representatives
1224 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Burgess:

On behalf of the American Hospital Association (AHA) and our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health care systems and other health care organizations, and our 37,000 individual members, I am writing to support H.R. 1666, the Health Care Price Transparency Promotion Act of 2007.

Consumers deserve meaningful information about the price of their hospital care and hospital leaders are as committed to sharing this information as they are to sharing information about quality. The AHA believes that states, working with their state hospital associations, are the best sources for sharing meaningful pricing data. In fact, 32 states already require hospitals to report information on hospital charges or payment rates and make that data available to the public; an additional six states have voluntary efforts. Your legislation not only builds on this innovation, it also requires insurers to participate in the disclosure process by providing information of estimated out-of-pocket costs for health care services.

Finally, the bill asks the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to conduct a study on the types of price information that consumers want and would find useful in their health care decision-making. This is valuable because, while we have research on the kind of information consumers want about health care quality, we know less about what they might want to know about pricing.

Sharing meaningful information with consumers about the price of their hospital care will greatly enhance the market-based approach to health care. We appreciate your leadership and we look forward to working with you to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President

