New York State Association of
Health Care Providers, Inc.

Representing home and community-based care

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September 13, 2010

The Honorable Nydia Velazquez
U.S. House of Representatives
Room 2466 - Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congress Member Velazquez,

On behalf of the members of the New York State Association of Health Care Providers, Inc. (HCP), I urge you to support the Home Health Care Access Protection Act of 2010 (H.R. 5803), which will promote greater transparency of regulatory home care cuts initiated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

Since 2008, CMS has enacted deep cuts to home care based on the assertion that a portion of the increase in the utilization of home care services has not been related to real changes in patient need. Conversely, a study by the Lewin Group found that patient characteristics have changed dramatically during the past decade, which likely account for the utilization increase and raises questions about the accuracy of the CMS analysis. Additionally, Lewin Group found several methodology flaws with the CMS study.

Today's home care patients are being discharged from institutional care quicker and in worse health than in the past, resulting in the elderly needing more intense care at home. CMS must not be given unfettered authority to implement regulatory cuts that will jeopardize access to care, especially when their methodology is questionable.

H.R. 5803 establishes a transparent and thorough process for reviewing home care usage that will result in a more comprehensive analysis and ultimately better public policy. We urge you to contact Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) or Rep. Walter Jones (R-NC) in support of the bill.

Please do not hesitate to contact Travis Wattie, Assistant Director, Public Policy & Communications at 518.463.1118, ext. 832 or wattie@nyshcp.org or me with questions.

Sincerely,

Phyllis A. Wang
President