



**A Coalition of 14 Medical Societies Representing
more than 220,000 Specialty Physicians in the United States**

www.specialtydocs.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 27, 2005

Contact: Mike Warner(202-745-5109)
Barbara Peck (202-628-2072)

Specialty Doctors Support Action on Patient Safety

Doctors say bipartisan agreements would benefit patients and the health care system

The Alliance of Specialty Medicine issued the following statement regarding the House of Representatives passage today of patient safety legislation (HR 3205). The legislation reflects negotiations between House and Senate leaders from both parties. It was passed by the full US Senate last week and is likely to proceed to the President for signature without conference.

“The Alliance of Specialty Medicine believes that widespread sharing of best practices and information on adverse events by medical professionals will go a long way toward ensuring the delivery of consistent, quality medical care to all patients. As Congress considers adding data reporting and quality measurement components to the Medicare physician payment system, this legislation becomes more important than ever. Only with assurances that patient data will be protected by law will doctors be able to report clinical quality information with confidence and accuracy.

This legislation has broad bipartisan support and will greatly benefit patients and health care professionals. By asking physicians and related medical personnel to share patient safety data in a voluntary and confidential manner, a rich repository of information can be analyzed by appropriate quality improvement organizations and shared among health care workers nationwide. The legislation promises to create an environment that encourages health professionals to develop data-driven safety systems that improve upon their experiences, without simultaneously creating a climate of blame and retribution. The legislation will result in a fuller understanding of the most appropriate processes and techniques that consistently produce quality medical outcomes. Once signed, the Alliance of Specialty Medicine stands ready to help ensure a swift and thorough adoption by America’s specialty doctors.”

- Sidney Levitsky, M.D.
President, The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
Chair, Patient Safety Working Group, Alliance of Specialty Medicine

###

The Alliance of Specialty Medicine is a non-partisan group based in Washington, DC, dedicated to the development of sound federal healthcare policy that fosters patient access to the highest quality specialty care. Among the Alliance’s top policy priorities are advancing reforms of the nation’s medical liability system, reforming the Medicare program to ensure the greatest access to care for seniors, and ensuring patients have access to the highest quality healthcare, in part by ensuring that effective patient safety measures are in place.

American Academy of Dermatology Association • American Association of Neurological Surgeons/Congress of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons • American College of Cardiology • American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists • American College of Radiology Association
American Gastroenterological Association • American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology • American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery
American Urological Association • National Association of Spine Specialists • Society of Thoracic Surgeons