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"First, surgeons are not reimbursed by Medicare, nor by any provider for that matter, for foot amputations at rates anywhere close to \$50,000, \$40,000 or even \$30,000. Medicare reimbursements to physicians for foot amputations range from approximately \$700 to \$1,200, which includes the follow-up care the surgeon provides the patient [for] up to 90 days after the operation. Moreover, orthopaedic surgeons are actively involved in the preventive care that you mentioned. We are a specialty that focuses on limb preservation whenever possible and when it is in the best interests of the patient. Our approach to amputation follows the same careful, thoughtful approach, always with the patient's best interest as the primary focus.

"It is also a mischaracterization to suggest that physicians are reimbursed 'immediately.' The AAOS itself, along with numerous other organizations, has testified in congressional hearings investigating the delays in reimbursement by Medicare and other payers that create additional administrative burdens making it more difficult to provide access to care for patients.

"As you continue to pursue your health care reform agenda, we implore you to disengage from hyperbole," and it goes on.

[From AAOS Now, Sept. 2009]

AUGUST 13, 2009.

AAOS RESPONDS TO OBAMA'S AMPUTATION  
REMARKS

President BARACK OBAMA,  
*The White House,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On behalf of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), I am writing to express our profound disappointment with your recent comments regarding the value of surgery and blurring the realities of physician reimbursements. The AAOS represents more than 17,000 U.S. board-certified orthopaedic surgeons who provide essential services to patients every day. As you yourself have said, "Where we do disagree, let's disagree over things that are real, not these wild misrepresentations that bear no resemblance to anything that's actually been proposed." In that spirit, we would like to bring some clarity to your comments and underscore the value that orthopaedic surgeons bring to Americans every day of every year.

First, surgeons are not reimbursed by Medicare, nor by any provider for that matter, for foot amputations at rates anywhere close to \$50,000, \$40,000, or even \$30,000. Medicare reimbursements to physicians for foot amputations range from approximately \$700 to \$1,200, which includes the follow-up care the surgeon provides to the patient [for] up to 90 days after the operation. Moreover,

orthopaedic surgeons are actively involved in the preventive care you mention. We are a specialty that focuses on limb preservation whenever possible and when it is in the best interests of the patient. Our approach to amputation follows the same careful, thoughtful approach, always with the patient's best interest as the primary focus.

It is also a mischaracterization to suggest that physicians are reimbursed "immediately." The AAOS itself, along with numerous other organizations, has testified in Congressional hearings investigating the delays in reimbursement by Medicare and other payers that create additional administrative burdens making it more difficult to provide access to care for patients.

As you continue to pursue your health care reform agenda, we implore you to disengage from hyperbole and acknowledge that health care delivery can only be improved by recognizing that health care is a system in which orthopaedic surgeons play a crucial role. With \$849 billion of our national economy impacted by musculoskeletal conditions, orthopaedic surgeons provide care that improves lives and puts people back to work. Pediatric orthopaedic surgeons provide life-altering care to our nation's children and play an invaluable role in ensuring Medicaid patients have access to needed services. Military and civilian orthopaedic surgeons provide care to our service women and men, which preserves limbs and has improved survival rates over past conflicts. Orthopaedic trauma surgeons perform limb- and life-saving procedures and help to ensure that our communities have the medical services that we all deserve. Total hip and knee replacement surgeries are now two of the most successful operations in medicine through a predictable reduction in pain, restoration of function, and return of patients to both work and activities of daily living. And we are working every day to ensure that medicine provides Americans with disabilities the quality of life to which they are entitled.

The AAOS is committed to improving the American health care delivery system and increasing health care coverage. The most expedient way to accomplish your goal is to ensure that the debate is based in fact and reflects the value of the services that all physicians, including orthopaedic surgeons, provide. We request a meeting with you and your staff at your earliest convenience to discuss these important issues.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH D. ZUCKERMAN, MD,  
*President, American Academy*  
*of Orthopaedic Surgeons.*

Mr. Speaker, it is remarkable that the leader of this Nation continues to suggest, as do our friends on the other side of the aisle and the majority party, that the quality of health care that's provided in this Nation is not of the highest quality in the world. In fact, it is.

If you look at disease-specific criteria, whether it's cancer or heart disease or diabetes or trauma or virtually any disease you can think of, Americans have the highest quality of care related to that specific diagnosis than anywhere in the world. It's why my friend from North Carolina said that when people are injured or have a disease from somewhere else in the world, they come, they flock to the United States by the hundreds of thousands to get care. And in this whole discussion about health care, to denigrate the care that's provided by compassionate and caring physicians and other pro-

viders around this Nation does a disservice to the debate and it makes it so that we are not talking about real things, about real things that affect real people.

So I implore the President, I call on the President, I call on the Speaker, I call on my friends on the other side of the aisle to know of which you speak when you are talking about health care, to make certain that when you are talking about issues that relate to accessibility for patients and affordability for patients and quality of care and responsiveness of a system and innovation in a system and choices that patients must have in order to gain the highest quality of care and the care that's most appropriate for them and their families.

Because, Mr. Speaker, as you may know, and as I hope the President now recognizes, that a given diagnosis in one patient doesn't necessarily mean that the same diagnosis in another patient is followed up with the same treatment, because no two people are the same. It's what this whole debate ignores. No two American citizens, no two individuals in this world, given the same diagnosis, regardless of that diagnosis, are absolutely the same, and the treatment that those individuals ought to receive ought to be determined by patients, those patients, and their families and caring and compassionate physicians.

This notion by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, by the President of the United States, by the Speaker of this House and by members of the majority party that somehow you could come up with some algorithm that if you just answer the questions correctly and march through the maze that the American people will be better served, Mr. Speaker, you know that's not true and I know that's not true.

When we come to this House, when we come to the United States Senate and we recognize that there are challenges that we face in the health care arena, we ought to come together as Americans and solve this challenge in a way that respects those principles of health care and respects the fundamental American principles that have allowed us to become the greatest nation in the history of mankind.

I look forward to that debate. I look forward to that discussion, and I look forward to being able to vote and have all Members of this body vote on a bill that will reform our health care system in a positive and productive way.

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LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MEEK of Florida (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of business in the district.

## SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SOUDER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, September 25 and 29.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, today, September 23 and 24.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, today, September 25 and 29.

Mr. FORBES, for 5 minutes, September 23.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, September 25.

Mr. INGLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, today, September 23, 24 and 25.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, for 5 minutes, September 24.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, for 5 minutes, September 23 and 24.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, for 5 minutes, September 23 and 24.

## ADJOURNMENT

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, September 23, 2009, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,  
ETC.

Under clause 2 of Rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3629. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; St. Thomas Harbor, Charlotte Amalie, U.S.V.I. [COTP San Juan 07-079] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3630. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; St. Thomas Harbor, Charlotte Amalie, U.S.V.I. [Docket No.: COTP San Juan 07-098] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3631. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Christiansted Harbor, Christiansted, U.S.V.I. [Docket No.: COTP San Juan 07-108] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3632. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Captain of the Port San Juan Tropical Cyclone Safety Zone [COTP San Juan 07-190] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3633. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zones; San Juan Harbor and Rio Grande, Puerto Rico [COTP San Juan 07-193] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3634. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; St. Croix Coral Reef Swim, Buck Island Channel, USVI [Docket No.: COTP San Juan 07-219] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3635. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Bahia de Guanica, Guanica, PR [Docket No.: COTP San Juan 07-250] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3636. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Sag Harbor Volunteer Ambulance Corp. Fireworks, Havens Beach, Sag Harbor, NY [CGD01-07-107] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3637. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Pier 67, Edgewater Hotel, Elliott Bay, Washington [CGD13-07-044] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3638. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Bellevue, KY, Ohio River Mile 469.2 to 470.2 [Docket No.: COTP Ohio Valley 07-024] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3639. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Tennessee River Mile Marker 255.5 to 256.5, Tuscumbia, AL [Docket No.: COTP Ohio Valley-07-027] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3640. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Pier 59/Seattle Aquarium and Pier 58, Elliott Bay, Washington [CGD13-07-045] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3641. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Clinch River Mile Marker 0.5 to Mile Marker 1.5, Kingston, TN [Docket No.: COTP Ohio Valley-07-028] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3642. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmit-

ting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Ohio River Mile 307.5 to 309.1, Huntington, WV [Docket No.: COTP Ohio Valley-07-029] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3643. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Pier 70/Waterfront Seafood Grill Restaurant, Elliott Bay, Washington [CGD13-07-046] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3644. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Cumberland River Mile Marker 125.4 to 126.6, Clarksville, TN [Docket No.: COTP Ohio Valley-07-030] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3645. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Budd Inlet, West Bay, Olympia, Washington [CGD13-07-047] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3646. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Ohio River Mile Marker 262.8 to Mile Marker 268.5, Point Pleasant, WV [Docket No.: COTP Ohio Valley-07-031] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3647. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Temporary Safety Zone; New Sauvie Island Bridge Arch Transfer Safety Zone, Terminal 2, Willamette River, Portland, Oregon [CGD13-07-050] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3648. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Warsaw, KY, Ohio River Mile 527.5 to 528.5 [Docket No.: COTP Ohio Valley 07-032] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3649. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Temporary Safety Zone; New Sauvie Island Bridge Arch Transfer Safety Zone, Terminal 2, Willamette River, Portland, Oregon [CGD13-07-050] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3650. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Port Everglades, Fort Lauderdale, Florida [COTP Miami 07-202] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3651. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zones; Weather-Forced Closure of the Tillamook Bay Bar and Entrance [CGD13-07-058] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.