



TMA STATEMENT — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 21, 2010

Countdown to Medicare Meltdown: Day 8

The following can be attributed to William H. Fleming III, MD, president of the Texas Medical Association. Dr. Fleming's statement is about the impending Medicare physician payment cuts slated for March 1, 2010.

“Texas physicians are deeply concerned about our broken Medicare system and the patients it is supposed to serve. For the past decade, Congress has failed to fix the flawed payment formula used to calculate what it pays physicians. And each year, the payment cut grows deeper. In less than eight days, Medicare will impose a 21.2-percent cut in physicians’ payments. A cut of this magnitude is devastating for Medicare patients and the physicians who treat them.

Right now in Texas, more than 2.5 million senior citizens and people with disabilities, and 850,000 military family members depend on Medicare for health care. If Congress does not stop the cut in the next eight days, these patients will have Medicare coverage but may not have a physician of their choice to care for them. This is devastating. We need a rational Medicare physician payment system that automatically keeps up with the cost of running a practice and is backed by a fair, stable funding formula.”

TMA is the largest state medical society in the nation, representing nearly 45,000 physician and medical student members. It is located in Austin and has 120 component county medical societies around the state. TMA’s key objective since 1853 is to improve the health of all Texans.

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