

Sample Letter to Your U.S. Representative and Senators

Please note: If you are not sure of the name of your U.S. Representative and Senators, call the ASHA Action Center at 800-498-2071, or visit ASHA's Gateway to Action at www.asha.org.

<On your business or home stationery>

<date>

The Honorable <insert full name>
United States House of Representatives / United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515 / 20510

Dear Representative / Senator <insert last name>:

I urge your strong support for an extension of the moratorium on the enforcement of the \$1500 therapy caps under Part B of the Medicare program. I believe a three-year extension of this moratorium is necessary to ensure that proper time and consideration are given to the establishment of a new payment methodology for outpatient speech-language pathology services, physical therapy services, and occupational therapy services. Such a policy would serve to replace the current arbitrary dollar limitations on outpatient rehabilitation care.

You will recall that the \$1,500 therapy caps were established as part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. In 1999, Congress imposed a two-year moratorium on enforcement of this provision due to concerns expressed by consumers and providers of therapy services. The moratorium, which is in place for 2000 and 2001, was enacted to provide the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) the necessary time to develop appropriate mechanisms that can permanently replace the arbitrary caps on beneficiaries' access to necessary rehabilitation services.

It has become clear that two years is not enough time for HCFA to adequately research and develop such a mechanism. HCFA has only just begun to collect the data necessary to analyze this complicated issue. In order to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries are not cut off from needed care, I urge you to support a three-year extension of the moratorium on the therapy caps.

Thank you for your consideration of my views. I hope you will take action on this important subject, and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

<Your name>