ACTION ALERT - Pulmonary Rehabilitation Legislation

Action Requested:
Today, please contact your Representatives to:

Co-sponsor legislation creating a pulmonary rehabilitation benefit in the Medicare program (H.R. 4824)

Deadline:
To have maximum impact, please contact your Senators by Friday, March 31st.

Too Busy To Write Congress? Let Us Do It For You!
Visit the ATS website and add your name to a draft letter that you can edit and email to your Members of Congress from the advocacy section of the ATS website. Click the button above, or visit the ATS website at:

http://capwiz.com/thoracic/home/

Background:
Reps. Chip Pickering (R-MS) and John Lewis (D-GA) have introduced legislation to create a category for pulmonary rehabilitation under the Medicare statute. Currently, many Medicare beneficiaries with respiratory conditions have access to pulmonary rehabilitation programs that are scientifically proven to improve the health and well being of patients with COPD and other diseases. These pulmonary rehabilitation programs have also been shown to reduce health care costs by reducing health care utilization in patients with COPD.

However, due to a quirk in Medicare law, not all Medicare beneficiaries have access to this proven medical therapy. The lack of a uniform policy on pulmonary rehabilitation programs means some Medicare beneficiaries are not receiving the optimal treatment for their disease. Such a situation is unacceptable.

The Pickering/Lewis bill would create a specific pulmonary rehabilitation benefit in the Medicare statute, therefore ensuring access to this proven therapy for all Medicare beneficiaries.

The Pickering/Lewis bill is a companion bill to the Senate legislation (S.1440) introduced by Senators Mike Crapo and Blanche Lincoln last year.

Specifically, the legislation will:

- Create a pulmonary rehabilitation benefit in the Medicare statute
- Create a national policy for coverage of pulmonary rehabilitation services