

# Community Oncology Alliance

*Dedicated to high quality, affordable, and accessible cancer care*

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November 13, 2012

The Honorable William Cassidy, MD  
United States House of Representatives  
Longworth House Office Building  
Room 1535  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Dr. Cassidy:

On behalf of the Community Oncology Alliance, I am writing to express our strong support for the legislation you have developed to address the drug shortages crisis. As you and Dr. Patrick Cobb noted in a recent opinion piece in the Wall Street Journal, the underlying root cause of the shortages is economic; in particular, unstable Medicare pricing for generic, sterile injectable drugs. Until pricing is stabilized, we believe that drug shortages will persist.

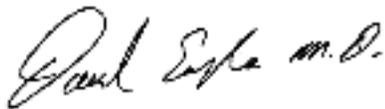
As an oncologist, I can tell you that shortages have adversely impacted cancer patients across the United States. This is truly a national crisis. In a survey COA completed among community cancer clinics, 98.9% of respondents reported experiencing a drug shortage problem. There are too many cases where treatment has to be delayed or suspended because of a shortage or, in cases where an alternate is available, more expensive therapy has to be used.

Although we appreciate strides Congress has already made in requiring manufacturers to warn when a shortage may occur and in strengthening the FDA's powers, these measures address the symptoms of the shortages, not the underlying cause. We believe that your proposed legislation targets the cause and will help stabilize an unsteady Medicare pricing system for generic, sterile injectable drugs.

We appreciate your keen interest in solving this crisis. As a fellow physician, you understand the responsibility we have to our patients, especially those already faced with the challenge of cancer. We should not task them with the additional burden of having their treatment delayed, suspended, or even modified because their treatment drug is unavailable.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



David Eagle, MD  
President

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