

July 9, 2012

The Honorable John Sullivan
U.S. House of Representatives
434 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott
U.S. House of Representatives
225 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressmen Sullivan and Scott:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing medical educators, practicing internal medicine specialists and subspecialists, and medical students, we are writing to express our strong support for H.R. 451, the "Healthcare Truth and Transparency Act of 2011." The bill is an important step toward ensuring that patients have accurate information regarding the education, training, and qualifications of those individuals providing their care.

Recent studies confirm patient confusion regarding the many types of health care providers, including physicians, technicians, nurses, physician assistants and other allied providers, engaged in providing services in healthcare settings. Consumers are often unaware of the differences in their qualifications and ambiguous provider nomenclature and advertisements can exacerbate patient uncertainty. According to a nationwide survey conducted by the American Medical Association, forty-four percent of patients find it difficult "to identify who is a licensed medical doctor and who is not" in reading what services the provider offers, their title and other licensing credentials in advertising or other marketing material. In addition, 87 percent of patients believe that health care providers should be required to display their level of training and legal licensure, including full disclosure in all advertising and marketing materials.

H.R. 451 will empower patients by ensuring that they have access to important information on the education and training of the individuals providing their care. In addition, it provides modest but necessary increases in resources to marketplace regulators to allow them to effectively enforce federal consumer protection laws pertaining to healthcare settings. This will increase transparency in the health care system and help patients become better consumers of health care services.

We applaud your leadership on this important issue, and look forward to working with you to ensure passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
American Academy of Neurology
American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists
American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
American College of Chest Physicians
American College of Physicians
American College of Rheumatology
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy