

UPDATE



neurosurgery

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Neurosurgeons Join More than 600 Organizations in Calling for Repeal of Medicare Board
Unelected board has power to cut billions of dollars from Medicare limiting seniors' access to care

Washington, DC – The American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) joined more than 600 organizations [urging](#) Congress to repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB). The organizations, speaking on behalf of medical providers, patients, consumers and health care industry leaders, cited the importance of protecting Medicare beneficiaries' access to high-quality care.

The IPAB was created by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and is a board of 15 unelected and largely unaccountable government bureaucrats whose primary purpose is to cut Medicare spending — a mission that will discourage the necessary long-term, structural improvements to the nation's health care delivery system. While Medicare spending growth did not trigger IPAB in previous years, nearly all experts — including Medicare's trustees — agree it will be triggered in 2017 and will require approximately \$1.5 billion in spending reductions. Moreover, the IPAB sets a dangerous precedent by implementing changes while circumventing the regular legislative process.

“Leaving Medicare payment decisions in the hands of an unelected, unaccountable governmental body whose only goal is to arbitrarily cut Medicare spending will negatively affect timely access to quality health care for our patients,” said Dr. Alex B. Valadka, a neurosurgeon from Richmond, VA and president-elect of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons.

Dr. Valadka added, “Neurosurgery recognizes that we must continue to address inefficiencies in our health care system, but the IPAB is simply the wrong solution for dealing with these budgetary challenges. The time has come for Congress to do its job by repealing the IPAB and replacing it with a workable alternative that adequately safeguards access to care for those who need it most — seniors and individuals with disabilities.”

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The American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS), founded in 1931, and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS), founded in 1951, are the two largest scientific and educational associations for neurosurgical professionals in the world. These groups represent over 8,000 neurosurgeons worldwide. Neurological surgery is the medical specialty concerned with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of disorders that affect the entire nervous system, including the spinal column, spinal cord, brain and peripheral nerves. For more information, please visit www.aans.org or www.cns.org, read our blog www.neurosurgeryblog.org, follow us on [Twitter](#) or connect with us on [Facebook](#).