

October 9, 2000

The Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

8 3 1 4 '00 OCT 19 P2:12

Dear Madam Secretary,

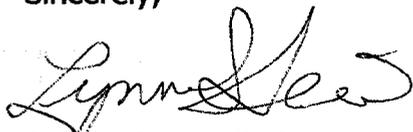
As a practicing oncology nurse concerned about cancer care, I want to thank you for focusing on problems impacting the Medicare program. I also want to urge your support for legislative reform that rationalizes Medicare reimbursement and preserves patient access to care.

The cancer community has long contended that the Medicare program is in need of reform because it overpays for many drugs and underpays for many services. This serious flaw has forced caregivers to engage in a form of 'cost shifting' – they have to use drug overpayments in an attempt to offset the deep underpayment they receive for the treatment services they provide to beneficiaries.

This is an unacceptable practice. It is the source of unbearable uncertainty for seniors with cancer, and it places tremendous pressure on caregivers. The legislation developed by Congress directs the General Accounting Office to thoroughly analyze all issues relating to cancer care reimbursement and requires that the current system be fixed when that study is complete. Just as important, the legislation secures coverage of self-administrable therapies, which has been eliminated by some Medicare carriers.

Madam Secretary, I urge you to support legislative provisions that will fix the Medicare system and secure patients' access to quality cancer care. I hope you will support the inclusion of this legislation in the final bill that will be sent to the President for his signature. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Andrea Lynne Stein
121 Fairway Drive
Bullard, TX 75757

cc: The Republican and Democratic Leadership of the House of Representatives and the Senate
Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee
Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the House Commerce Committee
Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable John Podesta

93N 0372

C4744

ROBERT & LYNNE STEIN
121 FAIRWAY DR.
BULLARD, TX 75757

FOUR SEASONS HOTEL
Newport Beach



The Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Ave., SW
Washington DC 20201

