Support Permanent Repeal of the Medicare SGR

Background
For the past 11 years, the Medicare sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula has impeded stability in the Medicare program for beneficiaries and providers. During that time, Congress has intervened 16 times to temporarily suspend the payment cuts called for by the SGR formula. At a total cost of $164 billion, these patches have now cost more than permanent repeal would cost. Short-term patches do not solve the problem—a permanent solution is needed to ensure the future integrity of the Medicare program.

Problem
Unless Congress acts, a 24.1 percent physician pay cut for Medicare services will begin April 1. The neurology workforce is already strained. Uncertainty in the Medicare program exacerbates the availability of qualified specialists across the US. And as demonstrated over the past decade, short-term patches are fiscally irresponsible and unnecessarily delay full repeal.

Consequences
Failure to capitalize on the lower offset now projected for the permanent repeal the SGR formula will jeopardize access to Medicare services. Enrollment in Medicare will grow twice as fast in 2014 as it did in 2013. In fact, 10,000 new enrollees enter Medicare every single day. Access to physicians will suffer for the Medicare population as the gap between payments and practice costs continues to grow.

Solution
Unprecedented bipartisan, bicameral legislation to permanently repeal the SGR has been introduced recently. Please cosponsor the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014 (HR. 4015/S. 2000) and request a floor vote on this important bill before April 1.