

**SUPPORT THE GANSKE/NORWOOD/DINGELL  
BIPARTISAN PATIENT PROTECTION ACT (HR 2563)**

July 23, 2001



Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 150,000 members of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), I urge you to support the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act (HR 2563), sponsored by Reps. Greg Ganske (R-IA), Charlie Norwood (R-GA), and John Dingell (D-MI). On June 29, the Senate passed its version of the bill (S 1052) and it is now time for the House to move forward on behalf of patients by passing meaningful managed care reform. AAUW believes that HR 2563 will establish enforceable federal standards to assure a minimum level of quality and consumer protections for women and all Americans covered by private insurance.

AAUW believes that HR 2563 will improve access to health care services for women and their families by:

- providing coverage for the 160 million privately insured Americans;
- guaranteeing that patients can have a health plan's decision to deny care reviewed by an independent medical expert so that managed care plans can be held accountable when their decisions to withhold or limit care result in injury or death;
- ensuring that women have direct access to ob-gyn services from the participating health care professional of their choice;
- ensuring access to specialists, including, when appropriate, specialists outside a plan's network; and
- ensuring access to clinical trials for new treatment options that may save lives.

In contrast, the managed care reform bill sponsored by Rep. Ernest L. Fletcher (HR 2315) lacks several important patient protections. For example, HR 2315 would: delay rapid access to external review of HMO decisions; reverse the evolution of case law favoring patients by moving all medical injury cases against HMO's to federal court; and impede access to specialty care, continuity of care, and clinical trials. In addition, HR 2315 would preempt state laws already enacted in Texas, Georgia, Arizona, and California that give patients legal recourse when decisions made by managed care plans to deny or limit care result in injury or death. Further, HR 2315 would not provide coverage for all privately insured Americans. AAUW opposes HR 2315 and believes that only the Ganske/Norwood/Dingell (HR 2563) bill can truly ensure patient protections for all Americans.

Once again, we urge you to support the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001 (HR 2563) and oppose the Fletcher bill (HR 2315). Please contact Nancy Zirkin, Director of Public Policy and Government Relations, at 202/785-7720, or Jamie Pueschel, Government Relations Manager, at 202/785-7730, if you would like to discuss this or any other issue important to AAUW.

Sincerely,



Nancy Rustad  
President



Jacqueline Woods  
Executive Director