



American Optometric Association

1505 Prince Street • Alexandria, VA 22314 • (703) 739-9200

FAX: (703) 739-9497

April 5, 2001

The Honorable John D. Dingell
U.S. House of Representatives
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dingell:

The American Optometric Association (AOA), representing more than 32,000 doctors of optometry, is pleased to register its support for H.R. 526, the *Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001*. This legislation represents a sound, bipartisan approach to addressing health care problems confronting millions of Americans.

The *Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001* embodies the key elements necessary for meaningful managed care reform. The AOA supports this legislation because it: (1) protects a patient's right to choose a provider, (2) ensures equity and competition in the health care marketplace and, (3) underscores the importance of quality and accountability in health care.

Patients must be empowered to make choices on issues affecting the health care they receive. This will promote quality, competition, efficiency and responsibility within the health care arena.

You should be commended for your leadership in promoting patient protection legislation during the 107th Congress. As the changing environment of health care economics funnels more and more Americans into managed care plans, Congress must ensure that our traditional commitment to patient choice, high quality care and accountability is not forgotten.

Sincerely,

Howard J. Braverman, O.D.
President