

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
NEUROLOGICAL SURGEONS

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February 4, 2015

The Honorable Michael Burgess, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
2336 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Gene Green
U.S. House of Representatives
2470 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Subject: The Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act, H.R. 647

Dear Representatives Burgess and Green:

On behalf of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS), we would like to thank you for introducing the "The Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act" (H.R. 647), are pleased to offer our strong support of this important legislation.

Dear Representatives Burgess and Green:

As you know, this bill would reauthorize vital programs to prevent more closures and improve access to trauma care. The Trauma Care Center Grants prevent more trauma center closures by supporting their core missions, curtailing losses from uncompensated care and providing emergency awards to centers at risk of closing. Also, the Trauma Service Availability Grants are channeled through the States to address shortfalls in trauma services and improve access to and the availability of trauma care in underserved areas.

Passage of this vital legislation would ensure the availability and effective use of trauma care to save lives, costs and improve patient outcomes. Trauma can happen to anyone, anytime and anywhere. As demonstrated by the numerous lives saved during the Boston Marathon bombing and other recent mass casualty events by getting the severely injured to a Level I or II trauma center during the "golden hour." From 1990-2005, 30 percent of trauma centers closed in large part due to the high level of uncompensated care they provide. Access to timely trauma care has improved in some parts of the nation, but remains unavailable to millions of Americans.

Trauma will continue to occur, despite our best prevention efforts. Unfortunately, access to trauma care is threatened by losses associated with the high cost of treating severely injured patients, including those unable to pay for their care, as well as a growing shortage of trauma related physicians (e.g. trauma, neurological and orthopaedic surgeons) who rely upon trauma centers for the costs of trauma call coverage.

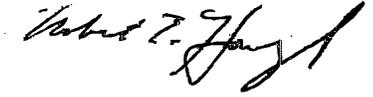
The public's expectation that trauma care will always be available to them wherever they reside or travel has yet to be met. The challenges facing trauma centers, trauma systems and physicians who treat our most vulnerable patients are profound. Thus, we urge swift passage of this important legislation.

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Sincerely,



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Nathan R. Selden, MD, PhD, President
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