



American Burn Association

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The Honorable Michael Burgess
U.S. House of Representatives
1721 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gene Green
U.S. House of Representatives
2335 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Burgess and Green:

On behalf of the 3,000 members of the American Burn Association ("ABA"), we would like to thank you for introducing H.R. 648, the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act and H.R. 647, the Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act. The ABA strongly endorses both bills. H.R. 648 received strong bipartisan support in the 114th Congress and was passed unanimously both out of the Energy and Commerce Committee and the floor of the House. In the Senate, the HELP Committee also unanimously reported out this legislation.

As was seen in the response to the Boston Marathon bombing, the immediate availability of emergency medical personnel and timely access to major trauma and burn centers was essential to saving so many of the victims. The Public Health Services Act authorized trauma and emergency care programs to address the need to improve trauma and burn care by providing seed money to the States to develop and enhance their trauma systems to ensure available services in all geographic regions and to support the existing trauma and burn center infrastructure.

A well-established trauma burn and emergency care system and structure is absolutely essential to building capacity, managing resources and ensuring that the injured patient gets to the right facility as quickly as possible. In cases of serious injury, transferring the patient promptly to a level 1 trauma center or verified burn center is critical to enhancing survivability. Not all patients should go to the closest or largest hospital and critically injured patients must be sent to centers that have the capability of treating them.

H.R. 648 will also promote better quality burn care by requiring State plans for emergency medical services to contain "national standards and requirements of the American Burn Association ("ABA") for the designation of verified burn centers." Conditioning federal payments on verification will help ensure that participating burn centers are providing the highest quality care. This is a new provision that parallels current law which already requires adherence to the standards of the American College of Surgeons ("ACS"), American College of Emergency Physicians and American Academy of Pediatrics as a prerequisite for funding.

H.R. 647 will also authorize important financial support to trauma centers, several of which have closed over the past 15 years, to ensure that these centers survive and flourish to serve the millions of Americans whose lives depend on access to these important centers of specialized care.

Sincerely,

John A. Krichbaum, J.D.
CEO and Executive Director