February 21, 2014

The Honorable Michael Burgess, M.D. 
The United States House of Representatives  
2336 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gene Green  
The United States House of Representatives  
2470 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Dr. Burgess and Representative Green:

On behalf of America’s trauma centers and systems, the Trauma Center Association of America (TCAA) writes to express our strong support for the “Trauma Systems and Research Reauthorization Act,” which among other provisions would reauthorize the Trauma and Emergency Care Systems Grants (Part A of Title XII of the PHSA) through 2019. These programs are essential to ensure the coordination of trauma care delivery among trauma centers, ambulances, helicopters, state and local governments as well as implement and evaluate innovative models of regionalized emergency care systems.

TCAA is a non-profit, 501(c)(6) association representing trauma centers and systems across the country. TCAA is committed to ensuring access to life-saving trauma services, and it is out of that commitment we support this vital legislation and urge its enactment.

Trauma is a major public health issue. In the United States, approximately 35 million people are treated every year for traumatic injuries -- which includes one hospitalization every 15 minutes. Traumatic injury is the leading cause of death under age 44. And, at an annual cost of $67.3 billion, trauma is the 3rd most costly medical condition (behind heart disease ($90.9b) and cancer ($71.4b)).ii Passage of reauthorization of the Trauma and Emergency Care Systems Grants is an important step toward continuing and strengthening these important programs and ensuring patients have access to the life saving trauma care they need.

We greatly appreciate your commitment to preserve access to trauma care and look forward to working with you on the reauthorization of the Trauma Care Center Grants (Part D of Title XII of the PHSA) and Trauma Service Availability Grants (Part H of Title XII of the PHSA) in the near future. The importance of trauma systems in expediting patient care and transport cannot be overstated. However, in order to ensure access, designated or verified trauma centers must provide a level of readiness beyond what is found in ordinary emergency departments, including dedicated staff, physician, and facility resources representing up to sixteen medical specialties on a 24-7 basis. The Trauma and Emergency Care Programs in the Public Health Service Act are highly coordinated and therefore we urge reauthorization of all the trauma grants.
Should you or your staff have any questions concerning these matters, please contact me at 575-525-9511 or jennifer@traumacenters.org, or Miranda Franco with Holland & Knight at 202-469-5259 or Miranda.frano@hklaw.com.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Ward, MBA, RN
President
Trauma Center Association of America

1 National Trauma Institute. www.nationaltraumainstitute.com, San Antonio, TX.
2 Injury Prevention & Control: Trauma Care. www.cdc.gov/traumacare, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA.