FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMDA Applauds Congress on Passing of SGR Repeal

Columbia, MD – The bill known as the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015, which includes the repeal of the sustainable growth rate (SGR), was passed by the Senate late Tuesday night, after being passed by the House of Representatives in late March, and will now head to President Obama for his signature.

The bill builds on the bipartisan, bicameral SGR repeal legislation that AMDA supported and was negotiated last year to repeal the SGR and provide stable payment updates of 0.5 percent for five years. In addition to repealing the SGR, the bill would also eliminate many of the current value-based payment program penalties and consolidate the three main programs: the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS), Meaningful Use, and the Value-Based Payment Modifier (VM) into one into one Merit-based Incentive Payment System, or “MIPS.” Further, the bill includes a provision to extend the therapy caps for three years, a move applauded by the nursing home trade associations and supported by AMDA. It also delays the “two-midnight” rule until September 30, 2015.

AMDA President Naushira Pandya, MD, CMD, commented, “We are grateful that Congress has come together to pass this vital legislation, which will reward post-acute and long-term care (PA/LTC) practitioners for the level of quality care they provide. The monies appropriated in the legislation will help us develop meaningful and appropriate quality measures for the PA/LTC setting. We look forward to our continued work with Congress, Federal Agencies, and other stakeholders.”

AMDA Public Policy Committee Chair Charles Crecelius, MD, PhD, CMD, an AMDA member and PA/LTC practitioner who has spent years waiting and fighting for a repeal, said, “The SGR fix is an extremely welcome solution to a long standing fiscal dilemma. As a bonus it also assists in addressing some of the concerns about the implementation of value-based models.” AMDA has long supported the push to repeal SGR, in favor of aligning payments with our mission of providing quality care, and reimbursing PA/LTC practitioners for quality over quantity. AMDA’s incoming Public Policy Chair Karl Steinberg, MD, CMD, added that he hopes this bipartisan, bicameral agreement “ushers in a new era of working together to achieve sensible and collaborative changes to improve the health care system.” AMDA is appreciative of the many stakeholders that have supported the repeal over the years, including AMDA members, who have written thousands of letters to their representatives.

For more information on H.R. 2 The Medicare and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015, click here.

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AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine is dedicated to excellence in patient care and provides education, advocacy, information and professional development to promote the delivery of quality post-acute and long-term care medicine.

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