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June 18, 2010

Senate passes six-month SGR fix

The U.S. Senate passed an amended version of H.R. 3962, now called the “Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010,” by unanimous consent this afternoon. This legislation provides a 2.2 percent Medicare physician payment update for six months, from June 1 through Nov. 30, in lieu of the 21 percent cut scheduled for 2010.

Unfortunately, the U.S. House of Representatives is not scheduled to hold any floor votes until the evening of June 22. As a result, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is instructing its carriers to lift the hold on processing claims for services provided on or after June 1, and to begin processing them under the law’s negative update requirement. In other words, claims will begin to be paid today at the 21 percent lower rate on a first-in/first-out flow basis.

Once H.R. 3962 is passed by the House and signed by President Obama, CMS will retroactively adjust any June claims that have been paid.

View an [AMA news release](#) about the Medicare physician payment crisis.

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