



May 20, 2010

The Honorable Sander Levin, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dave Camp, Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives
1139E Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R. 4213

Dear Chairman Levin and Ranking Member Camp:

The American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA) strongly supports H. R. 4213, the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act of 2010. This legislation contains a number of provisions critically important to the frail elders we serve, and we urge passage of the bill by the House.

AAHSA (www.aahsa.org) is a national network of community-based nonprofit organizations that provide services and supports to people as they age. These 5,400 organizations connect with millions of older persons and their families every day. They provide home health care, adult day services, hospice, senior housing, nursing care, assisted living, continuing care and a broad range of related services. AAHSA is the most trusted advocate for aging whose spirit of transformational stewardship and close collaboration with its members consistently improves lives.

H.R. 4213 contains a six-month extension of the additional Medicaid funding states received under last year's economic stimulus package. This extension is vital to preventing Medicaid cuts in states that must still balance their budgets in the face of the recession's continuing effects. Many frail elders depend on Medicaid for coverage of long-term services and supports, both in nursing homes and in the community.

We also favor provisions of the bill that restore the October 1, 2010 effective date for full implementation of the new RUGs IV Medicare payment system for skilled nursing facilities. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act's delay of part but not all of the RUGs IV payment system would have caused great confusion for both the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and for the nursing homes themselves. We feel that RUGs IV improves the Medicare payment system for nursing facilities caring for the frailest and most medically complex patients, and we are pleased that this bill will put it back on track.

Finally, we are delighted that the bill includes resources for the National Housing Trust Fund and for new project-based Section 8 assistance to be used in conjunction with the NHTF. These programs will provide thousands of jobs at the same time that they address the pressing need for more affordable housing for people with low incomes.

We appreciate your leadership on this vital legislation, which has our strong support.

Sincerely,

William L. Minnix, Jr.
President and CEO