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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4103

November 4, 2003

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Senator for Iowa
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-1501

Dear Chuck:

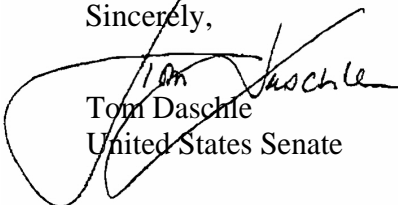
This is a quick note to reiterate my position regarding policies affecting durable medical equipment in the Medicare conference.

The Medicare bill you drafted and that passed the Senate includes a seven-year freeze in payments for durable medical equipment. The House Medicare bill includes a provision that would establish a competitive bidding system for durable medical equipment. I continue to have concerns about the House proposal including its impact in rural areas. For this reason, I went into the conference this summer supporting the Senate position, and I continue to take that position.

I understand that the discussions that have taken place among the group of conferees who are meeting favor the House position, I also understand that you are arguing for the Senate position. I want to express my support for your efforts on this issue. Please let me know if I can be of help.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,



Tom Daschle
United States Senate

TAD/tah