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May 27, 2021

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
U.S. Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
U.S. Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Cantwell and Grassley:

On behalf of the more than 82,000 members of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), we would like to express our support for the Lymphedema Treatment Act, S.1315. This bipartisan legislation is an important step in ensuring access to treatment for Medicare patients who are suffering from lymphedema.

Lymphedema (chronic lymphatic system failure) has a multitude of causes, one of which is surgery as a component of cancer treatment. Untreated or under-treated lymphedema becomes progressive, leading to increased morbidity, thus placing a costly burden on patients and the health care system. These risks and higher costs can be effectively mitigated with proper, consistent treatment.

Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT) is the standard of care for lymphedema and is a multimodal treatment that is only effective when used in its entirety. Current lack of Medicare coverage for an essential component of CDT, the compression supplies used in daily treatment, presents a roadblock for patients to access the full spectrum of care. As a result, many patients suffer from recurrent infections, progressive degradation in their condition and eventual disability because they cannot access the compression supplies required to treat their condition.

This legislation aims to improve insurance coverage for the medically necessary, doctor prescribed compression supplies that are the cornerstone of lymphedema treatment. Although this bill will only change Medicare law, ACS believes it will set a standard for Medicaid and private insurance to follow.

Again, thank you for your leadership in introducing the Lymphedema Treatment Act. We look forward to working with you as this important legislation moves through Congress.

Sincerely,

David B. Hoyt, MD, FACS
Executive Director