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May 6, 2019

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

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky  
2367 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer  
1111 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Young  
400 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Buddy Carter  
2432 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Kelly  
1707 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: The Lymphedema Treatment Act, S.518 and H.R.1948

Dear Senators and Representatives Cantwell, Young, Schakowsky, Carter, Blumenauer, and Kelly:

On behalf of myself and the Integrative Lymphedema Institute, I offer our formal endorsement of the Lymphedema Treatment Act, H.R.1948, and its Senate companion bill S.518.

In my capacity as an Oncologic Reconstructive and Lymphedema Surgeon, in addition to being a Certified Lymphedema Therapist, I have dedicated my career to comprehensive lymphedema care. I understand the effects of lymphedema, a serious medical disorder that affects millions of people throughout the United States. Lymphedema is a chronic, progressive, incurable but manageable condition in which swelling occurs in one or more extremities of the body. There are millions of women suffering from secondary lymphedema, following treatment of breast cancer alone. Some of the most common cancers causing lymphedema include breast cancer, gynecological cancers, melanoma, lymphoma, and sarcoma. In addition, many suffer from primary lymphedema, which occurs in babies and children and can also occur later in life.

For virtually all lymphedema patients, medical compression is the cornerstone of treatment to limit symptoms and to slow the progression of debilitating consequences. The timely and appropriate treatment of this condition would reduce costs of complications, infections, hospitalizations, and government disability expenditures. Most importantly, appropriate care with compression can improve quality of life.

Currently Medicare does not cover the medically necessary compression supplies used daily in lymphedema treatment, citing they do not fit under any benefit category. This bill would rectify this gap in coverage to provide the medically necessary compression supplies for proper treatment of this disease without a cure. Prevention of disease progression with compression is essential to patient care.

Thank you for your leading role in the sponsorship of the Lymphedema Treatment Act.

Sincerely,

Alexander T. Nguyen, MD, FACS, CLT