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News

For Immediate Release

STS Press Release

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STS Calls on Lawmakers to Make Patients a Priority

Statement from Richard L. Prager, MD, President of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

Washington, DC (September 22, 2017) — The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) is once again urging members of the Senate to ensure that patient access to high quality health care is a priority when considering health reform plans. The Society has acknowledged that reforms to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) are necessary to stabilize the health insurance marketplace; however, it is of the utmost importance that all Americans have access to life-saving health care services, including but not limited to hospital services and evidence-based screening protocols. Legislation like the bill recently introduced by Senators Graham and Cassidy will limit patients' access to evidence-based, comprehensive health care coverage and will have dire consequences on patient care and outcomes if passed by Congress.

Without a score from the Congressional Budget Office to quantify the effects of the proposed legislation, the Society cannot support the Graham-Cassidy legislation. Instead, STS urges Senators to work through regular order in an open, bipartisan manner and advance reforms that align with the Society's Health Reform Priorities, which include:

- Ensuring patient access to health care coverage that will provide for evidence-based, value-driven, life-saving care;
- Providing for the secure transfer of clinical, quality, and cost data so that health care providers can analyze their performance, modify their practices, and provide the best possible patient care;
- Promoting value and transparency in the health care system;
- Prioritizing expanding the physician workforce to meet the country's needs, the adoption of new technology, and continuous learning for practicing physicians; and
- Promoting access to team-based, coordinated health care.

The Society looks forward to working with Republicans and Democrats in the House and Senate to address the problems created by the ACA while protecting essential health benefits and ensuring access to health care.

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To speak with Dr. Prager, contact Jennifer Bagley, STS Media Relations Manager, at 312-202-5865 or media@sts.org

Founded in 1964, The Society of Thoracic Surgeons is a not-for-profit organization representing more than 7,400 cardiothoracic surgeons, researchers, and allied health care professionals worldwide who are dedicated to ensuring the best possible outcomes for surgeries of the heart, lung, and esophagus, as well as other surgical procedures within the chest. The Society's mission is to enhance the ability of cardiothoracic surgeons to provide the highest quality patient care through education, research, and advocacy.