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# News

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**For Immediate Release**

## **Sen. Bill Cassidy Recognized for Supporting Cardiothoracic Surgeons and Their Patients** ***STS Legislator of the Year Award honors visionary leadership and outstanding achievement***

WASHINGTON, DC (July 16, 2019) — Senator Bill Cassidy, MD, (R-LA) was named Legislator of the Year by The Society of Thoracic Surgeons on Tuesday for his commitment to promoting health care and advancing legislation and policies that impact cardiothoracic surgeons and their patients.

“Senator Cassidy has demonstrated impactful leadership, while consistently drawing on his experiences in the medical and policy fields to help advance issues that are vitally important to the health and wellbeing of Americans,” said Alan M. Speir, MD, chair of the STS Council on Health Policy and Relationships. “We thank him for his engagement and dedication, and congratulate him on receiving this award.”

Sen. Cassidy is one of 13 physician members of Congress—three in the US Senate. He is a gastroenterologist, specializing in the treatment of liver diseases. In 1998, he co-founded the Greater Baton Rouge Community Clinic, a not-for-profit organization that provides free health care and dental services to the working uninsured. He also created a private-public partnership to vaccinate 36,000 greater Baton Rouge area children against hepatitis B at no cost to the schools or parents.

Elected to the US Senate in 2014, Sen. Cassidy consistently has been a champion of STS advocacy priorities, especially physician-led initiatives to improve quality of care and lower costs. He has supported efforts to help the STS National Database gain access to Medicare claims data for quality and cost improvements. In addition, after seeking feedback from health care and patient communities, Sen. Cassidy led a bipartisan effort to improve price transparency and lower costs in the health care market. He also supported the repeal of the Sustainable Growth Rate and voted in favor of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015. Sen. Cassidy is currently working to develop a solution to the problem of surprise medical billing by creating a fair process for providers and insurers to settle discrepancies.

“The Society of Thoracic Surgeons’ registry has shaped how quality measures are approached,” said Sen. Cassidy. “To be recognized by such an organization is an honor indeed. I look forward to future collaborations that will benefit patients, our profession, and our country.”

Sen. Cassidy’s committee assignments include the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, the Veterans’ Affairs Committee, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, the Joint Economic Committee, and the Committee on Finance.

The STS Legislator of the Year Award acknowledges a member of Congress who has made sustained and/or extraordinary efforts in promoting issues of importance to cardiothoracic surgeons and their patients through legislation, funding, or other outreach to policymakers.

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Founded in 1964, The Society of Thoracic Surgeons is a not-for-profit organization representing more than 7,200 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.