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News

For Immediate Release

STS Press Release

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STS Opposes Current Health Care Reform Efforts

New legislation must protect essential health benefits and ensure access to health care

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

Washington, DC (July 27, 2017) — The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) urges members of the Senate to prioritize ensuring patient access to high quality health care when considering plans to reform health care. It is of the utmost importance that our patients, and all Americans, have access to life-saving healthcare services including, but not limited to, hospital services (including cardiothoracic surgery) and evidence-based screening protocols. Proposals that limit patients' access to evidence-based, comprehensive health care coverage will have dire consequences on patient care and patient outcomes, if passed by Congress.

We urge Senators to work through regular order in an open, bipartisan manner to advance reforms that align with STS's Health Reform Priorities which include:

- Ensuring patients' 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 healthcare.

Analyses from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) have shown that the health reform approaches being contemplated in the Senate would deprive many Americans of access to evidence-based, value-driven, life-saving care. According to the CBO, all of the proposals currently under consideration would result in the loss of insurance coverage for millions of Americans, limiting access to care for those who need it most.

Regrettably, because of the concerns articulated above, we cannot support the current health reform efforts in Congress and will oppose passage of any legislation that does not address our concerns. 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 7,300 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.