

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Physician Note: Congress to Consider Repeal of Medicare Payments Advisory Board

Plus: OIG quickly spending Recovery Act funds.

Just what physicians need is another group overseeing whether payments to doctors will be slashed...and fortunately, you may not have to face such a group going forward, if a new bill is approved.

As part of the Affordable Care Act, President Obama created the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), a 15-member government agency that had the power to change Medicare policy. Also referred to as a "Super PAC," the IPAB was considered a stronger version of the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC), which makes recommendations but cannot enact policies.

However, physician groups were quick to decry the IPAB, saying that cuts would be taking place at random and would affect not only medical practices, but also access to patient care. Last week, **Rep. Phil Roe** (R-Tenn.) introduced a bill that would repeal the IPAB. Roe had previously introduced the same bill in Congress last year. Medical groups cheered at the possibility of the IPAB's dismantling.

"The AMA is pleased that legislation to eliminate the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) has been introduced in the House," said AMA President **Jeremy Lazarus, MD**, in a Jan. 23 statement. "Patients and physicians are still struggling with the frequent threat of drastic cuts from the broken SGR Medicare physician payment formula. IPAB would be another arbitrary system that relies solely on payment cuts."

Keep an eye on the Insider for more information on whether Congress votes swiftly on the IPAB repeal.