

... August 25, 2015 Daybook/Calendar and News Advisory ...

AHEAD OF WEDNESDAY HEARING, AMPUTEE LEADERS TO TELL MEDICARE: DON'T DENY US ACCESS TO NEEDED PROSTHETIC CARE

#NotALuxury: Amputee Coalition, Former U.S. Sen. Bob Kerrey, Boston Marathon Survivor to Participate in Briefing on "Significant Setback" for Amputee Care Under Controversial Medicare Rule Proposal.

WASHINGTON, D.C./NEWS ADVISORY//Amidst growing concern over a Medicare rule proposal that would significantly impact care for two million U.S. amputees, the Amputee Coalition and the American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association (AOPA) will hold a live, phone-based news conference on the issue featuring experts, patients, former U.S. Senator Bob Kerrey, and a Boston Marathon survivor.

The Tuesday news event will precede a Wednesday public hearing at 8 a.m. in Linthicum, Maryland, where amputees and other stakeholders will present their concerns and opposition to the new proposed Medicare policy. (See additional issue background information below.)

On Wednesday afternoon, an amputee rally organized by AOPA is slated to take place at 2 p.m. outside of the offices of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the north sidewalk in front of 200 Independence Avenue SW. Hundreds of amputees and other concerned individuals from across the U.S. are expected to participate.

Speakers on the phone-based news event at 1230 p.m. EDT on Tuesday (August 25th) will include:

- Dan Berschinski, chairman of the board of directors, Amputee Coalition;
- Charlie Dankmeyer, president, American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association;
- Hon. Bob Kerrey, former U.S. Senator from Nebraska;
- Adrienne Haslet-Davis, Boston Marathon survivor and *Dancing With The Stars* competitor.
- Paul Pasquina, M.D. (invited); and
- Jack Richmond, an amputee from Cleveland, TN.

TO PARTICIPATE: Join the live, phone-based news conference (with full, two-way Q&A) at 1230 EDT on August 25, 2015, by dialing 1 (800) 860-2442. Ask for the "Medicare rule/amputees at risk" news event.

CAN'T PARTICIPATE?: A streaming audio replay of this news event will be available as of 4 p.m. EDT on August 25, 2015 at www.amputee-coalition.org and www.aopanet.org.

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BACKGROUND

Proposed changes to Medicare's reimbursement for lower limb prosthetic care would create unreasonable and clinically unjustified hurdles to amputees receiving care that is now routinely provided. The proposed changes in amputee care not only would have a devastating impact on Medicare amputee beneficiaries, but on all of the two million amputees in the U.S., since commercial health insurance payers tend to follow the lead of Medicare on such matters. According to the Amputee Coalition there are roughly two million persons in the U.S. living with limb loss, and there are approximately 185,000 new amputees each year. For more information, go to <http://www.amputee-coalition.org/advocacy-awareness/federal-issues/medicare-issue-alert/>.

For weeks now, a groundswell of opposition has been growing against the proposed Medicare rule which would have a significant negative impact on America's amputees. More than 100,000 Americans have signed a "We the People" [White House petition](#) to rescind the Medicare proposal restricting access to prosthetic limbs. The Amputee Coalition also has organized a social media campaign using the [#notaluxury](#) hashtag aimed at helping amputees to

learn about the proposal and provide comments to Medicare. For more information, go to <https://www.facebook.com/AmputeeUSA> on Facebook and [@AmputeesUSA](#) on Twitter.

ABOUT THE GROUPS

Today, almost 2 million Americans have experienced amputations or were born with limb difference. Another 28 million people in our country are at risk for amputation. The Amputee Coalition is the nation's leading organization on limb loss, dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for amputees and their families, improving patient care and preventing limb loss. With the generous support of the public, we are helping amputees live well with limb loss, raising awareness about limb loss prevention and ensuring amputees have a voice in matters affecting their ability to live full, thriving lives. Visit us at www.amputee-coalition.org.

The American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association is a national trade association committed to providing high quality, unprecedented business services and products to O&P professionals. Since our founding in 1917, we have worked diligently to establish ourselves as the voice for O&P businesses. Through government relations efforts, AOPA works to raise awareness of the profession and impact policies that affect the future of the O&P industry. AOPA membership consists of more than 2,000 O&P patient care facilities and suppliers that manufacture, distribute, design, fabricate, fit, and supervise the use of orthoses (orthopedic braces) and prostheses (artificial limbs). Membership in AOPA represents a professional milestone; it is recognition of leadership and achievement in the O&P community. Visit us at www.aopanet.org.