

THOMAS L. PETTY, M.D.

**Professor of Medicine
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
899 Logan Street, Suite 103
Denver, Colorado 80203-3154
Phone: 303 996 0868
Shared Fax: 303 831 6035
Email: TLPdoc@aol.com**

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Via E-Mail and FAX

Honorable Joe Schwarz
United States Congress
7th District of Michigan
House of Representatives
128 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Schwarz:

I wish to applaud the leadership of you and your co-sponsors of HR 5513, which will help the future of patients requiring long term home oxygen (LTOT). I hope your proposal will result in a revamping of oxygen reimbursement, and recognize the advantages of ambulatory oxygen, which has a strong scientific foundation.

LTOT began in Denver at the University of Colorado with our work in 1965, first published in 1967. We demonstrated a dramatic reduction in the strain on the heart and a great improvement in exercise and quality of life with ambulatory oxygen. Later I chaired the Nocturnal Oxygen Therapy Trial (NOTT), which was one of two major international studies that showed that LTOT improved survival. This landmark study was funded by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. Ambulatory oxygen resulted in better survival than stationery oxygen. Hospitalizations were far less frequent in ambulatory vs stationary oxygen patients.

We now have the technology to make "wearable oxygen" which weighs about 4.5 lb, which is another giant step in improving the quality of life in LTOT patients. Reimbursement for ambulatory patients must be greater that for home bound patients for obvious reasons of cost to the supplier. At today's reimbursement rate of about \$2400 per year, one day

of hospitalizations for COPD costing \$3600 per day, the decision seems obvious. I recognize the difference between Medicare A and reimbursement budgets, but it is still money in the national budget! As one of the pioneers who helped begin the movement to LTOT, which now serves 1.2 million Americans, I hope your efforts in gaining passage of your important legislation are successful. For the past 20 years, I have organized and co-chaired six Oxygen Consensus Conferences. The most recent was published this month.

If I can be of any assistance to you or your aides, I would be delighted to help.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas L. Petty, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
University of Colorado Health Science Center
President, Snowdrift Pulmonary Conference

References:

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2. Petty TL: Home oxygen -- A revolution in the care of advanced COPD. *Med Clin North Am* 1990;74:715-729.
3. [Doherty DE, Petty TL, Bailey W, et al: Recommendations of the 6th long-term oxygen therapy consensus conference. *Respir Care* 2006;51:519-525.](#)