



April 2, 2008

The Honorable Charles Schumer
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC

Dear Senator Schumer:

The Endocrine Society applauds your introduction of “The Diabetes Screening and Medicaid Savings Act of 2007” (S. 755). The Society strongly endorses this important legislation and thanks you for your leadership on the issue of diabetes. The Endocrine Society is the world's largest and most active professional organization of endocrinologists representing over 14,000 members worldwide. We are dedicated to quality research, patient care, and education.

As you know, 20.8 million children and adults in the United States have diabetes; this is 7 percent of the entire population. Of those 20.8 million, nearly one-third, or 6.2 million people are unaware that they have the disease. Although these numbers are only expected to increase, diabetes is a treatable disease if detected. Your legislation offers hope for those 6.2 million people who are living with diabetes and do not know it.

According to The National Institutes of Health, the U.S. spent \$132 billion on diabetes and its complications in 2002. However, it is possible to control these cost by increasing prevention, early detection, and management services. In addition, it is often those within the Medicaid population that suffer the most from diabetes complications because they cannot afford to treat the disease. Without access to diabetes medications, equipment, and educational training, people with diabetes are at a higher risk for diabetes-related complications such as blindness, kidney failure, and amputations. Preventative care, such as that provided in S. 755, not only saves money but improves the quality of life for many who suffer from the disease.

Thank you, Senator Schumer, for recognizing the importance of prevention and early detection. We fully support your efforts to increase access to screening and treatment for people with diabetes and strongly endorse “The Diabetes Screening and Medicaid Savings Act of 2007.” If we can be of assistance to you in any way, please contact Stephanie Kutler of The Endocrine Society staff at skutler@endo-society.org.

Sincerely,

Margaret Shupnik, PhD
President
The Endocrine Society