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* Diagnosed Alpha-1
Antitrypsin deficient

+ Diagnosed family member

October 30, 2007

The Honorable Mike Ross
314 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

VIA FACSIMILE: 202-225-1314

Dear Congressman Ross,

This is to express the Alpha-1 Foundation's strong support for H.R. 3968, your bill to allow respiratory patients to see a Respiratory Therapist without having to be hospitalized.

Respiratory therapists are an important factor in the healthcare treatment for individuals with Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency (Alpha-1), a genetic disorder that can lead to severe lung and liver disease in children and adults. We support H.R. 3968, the Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative Act of 2007, which we believe can lead directly to better care and better quality of life for Alphas, many of whom are disabled and rely on Medicare. We appreciate your leadership in the introduction of this bill.

This legislation will help ensure that those with Alpha-1 will have the delivery of health care services such as disease management, smoking cessation, and proper education on aerosol device delivery systems. Thank you for recognizing a vital reality: if an individual relies on Medicare they can see a physician without going to the hospital; they should not have to be admitted to the hospital to access the expertise of respiratory therapists. This bill is a progressive step forward, especially for those suffering with chronic infections or residing in rural settings.

Sincerely,

John W. Walsh
President and CEO

CC: Sam Giordano, Executive Director, AARC
Miriam O'Day, Legislative Affairs, AARC