Washington, DC 20515

U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Griffith and Beatty:

On behalf of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association (AHA/ASA) and the nearly 800,000 Americans who experience a stroke each year, we applaud you for introducing the Furthering Access to Stroke Telemedicine – or FAST – Act (H.R. 1148). Your legislation is a "win-win" for stroke patients and the federal budget.

By reducing disability from stroke, expanding access to telestroke can save Medicare and Medicaid money by increasing the percentage of stroke patients who are able to be discharged directly home, rather than to inpatient rehabilitation or long-term care. According to an AHA/ASA analysis, the FAST Act could result in *net* savings of \$1.2 billion over 10 years after both increased costs and savings are factored in.

In short, the FAST Act will help to improve the quality of stroke care that Medicare beneficiaries receive and will save money. We are encouraging your colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation and look forward to continuing to work with you to secure its enactment. Thank you again for your leadership in improving care for stroke patients.

Sincerely,

John J. Warner, M.D.

Jan Waven

President