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NATIONAL OFFICE

SOCIETY FOR VASCULAR NURSING
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October 1, 2019

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Todd Young
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
2367 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Buddy Carter
2432 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the Society for Vascular Nursing (SVN), I write to thank you for sponsoring S. 518, the Lymphedema Treatment Act. This bill will improve insurance coverage for compression supplies that are the cornerstone of lymphedema treatment.

Lymphedema is most commonly caused by the removal of or damage to lymph nodes as a part of cancer treatment. It results from a blockage in the lymphatic system, which is part of your immune system. The blockage prevents lymph fluid from draining well, and the fluid buildup leads to swelling. Patients with Lymphedema are often treated by vascular medicine providers, including vascular nurse practitioners. A key treatment is compression therapy to reduce the affected limb to near normal size and prevent complications related to edema. Despite being an ongoing necessity, compression supplies are not covered by Medicare. Your legislation would close this coverage gap by requiring Medicare to cover lymphedema compression items under the Part B durable medical equipment (DME) benefit.

This bill will afford our nurses the opportunity to be more effective caregivers and ultimately will result in more successful outcomes for vascular patients nationwide.

Founded in 1982, the SVN is a not-for-profit international association dedicated to promoting excellence in the compassionate and comprehensive management of persons with vascular disease. The Society's mission is to provide a professional community for nurses focused on advancing the care of persons living with vascular disease through excellence in evidence-based practice and education.

The SVN appreciates your leadership on this issue of access to lymphedema treatment. If SVN may be of assistance in this endeavor, please contact Joanna Bronson, Inter-Society Relations Director, at jbronson@vascularsociety.org.

Sincerely,

Patty Flanagan, MSN, RN-BC
President, Society for Vascular Nursing