

**SAMPLE LETTER TO MEMBER
OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Dear (insert name of Member of Congress)

I am writing to ask that you cosponsor H.R. 6478, the “Access to America’s Orthopaedic Services Act of 2008.” This bipartisan legislation has been introduced by Rep. Hilda Solis (D-CA) and Rep. Mike Burgess, M.D. (R-TX) and has been endorsed by the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons. H.R. 6478 raises awareness of musculoskeletal diseases and conditions among health care professionals and the public and advances orthopaedic patient care. While many of those suffering from musculoskeletal diseases and conditions receive high-quality care from orthopaedic surgeons, too many patients in this country lack access to these health services. H.R. 6478 allows us to better identify and address gaps in the nation’s musculoskeletal health care system.

The burden of musculoskeletal diseases and conditions has a much broader impact on our nation’s health care system than many realize. Musculoskeletal diseases and conditions are the leading cause of disability in the United States, account for more than one-half of all chronic conditions in people over 50 years of age, and require more than 1 in 4 Americans to seek medical attention. Annual direct and indirect costs for bone and joint health exceed \$849 billion.

This bipartisan legislation improves our knowledge about the public health effects of musculoskeletal diseases and conditions by: (1) ensuring better accounting of research on musculoskeletal diseases and conditions; (2) improving bone density screening standards; (3) establishing a national joint replacement registry and enhancing accreditation for tissue banks; (4) improving our knowledge about the treatment and management of musculoskeletal diseases and conditions; (5) enhancing our understanding of vehicular and workplace injuries, among other provisions; and, (6) reducing disease burden and injury among children, adolescent girls, seniors and underserved populations. This legislation is a priority for those providing and receiving orthopaedic services.

I would ask that you review this legislation and contact Rep. Solis or Rep. Burgess to add your name as a cosponsor of H.R. 6478.

Sincerely,