

April 1, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leaders Schumer and McCarthy:

We, the undersigned organizations that care about healthy aging, write to offer our strong support for the Protecting Seniors Through Immunization Act (H.R. 5076/S. 1872), and urge Congress to include this important legislation in an upcoming pandemic response package. This bipartisan legislation, which was introduced by Representatives Shalala, Bouchon, Kuster and Roe, would address a long-standing structural inequity that hinders immunization opportunities for Medicare beneficiaries, a cost-effective means of reducing disease burden and saving lives.

The Protecting Seniors Through Immunization Act will address the out-of-pocket payment required of Medicare beneficiaries, many of whom are on fixed incomes. Copayments apply to vaccines covered under Medicare Part D (tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis (Tdap) and varicella zoster (shingles)) but not vaccines under Part B (flu, pneumococcal), which are available with no cost to the beneficiary. The bill will also improve education and access to recommended vaccines for Medicare beneficiaries, with the goal of helping to increase vaccination rates.

This legislation is especially important in the wake of coronavirus public health crisis. As part of our public health preparedness we need to fix Medicare Part D. Older adults are at particular risk for serious illness and those 50 and older, particularly with multiple comorbidities, are at higher risk of dying if infected. Fixing structural inequities in vaccine coverage now through passage of the Protecting Seniors Through Immunization Act will provide a clear and direct financial and health benefit for people age 65 and over and will help to improve our national preparedness among the Medicare population.

Thank you for your leadership in swiftly addressing the serious health and economic challenges facing our nation during this uncertain time. We stand ready to work with you toward to improve vaccine access to a future COVID-19 vaccine as well as all recommended vaccines for the Medicare population.

Sincerely,

Advanced Practice Nursing  
African American Health Alliance  
Alliance for Aging Research  
Alliance for Immunizations in Michigan (AIM)  
American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)  
American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association  
American Behcet's Disease Association  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Immunization Registry Association  
American Kidney Fund  
American Lung Association  
American Society of Consultant Pharmacists (ASCP)  
American Society on Aging  
AOHP  
Arthur Caplan, PhD, NYU Langone Health  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations  
Association of Immunization Managers  
Black Women's Health Imperative  
Blank Children's Hospital  
California Immunization Coalition  
Caregiver Action Network  
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
COPD Foundation  
Dane County Immunization Coalition  
Dba Avalon Health Care Center  
Families Fighting Flu  
Forward Pharmacy  
Forward Pharmacy of Columbus  
Freddi Segal, GIDAN, Member of AAPA, GSA, and AGS  
Geriatric Medicine Physician Assistants  
Harris Teeter Pharmacy

Harvard University  
HealthHIV  
Healthy Solutions, Inc.  
HealthyWomen  
Hep B United  
Hepatitis B Foundation  
Idaho Immunization Coalition  
Immune Deficiency Foundation  
Immunization Action Coalition  
Immunize Colorado  
Immunize Nevada  
ImmunizeOhio  
ImmunizeTN  
Indiana Immunization Coalition  
Infectious Disease Epidemiologist  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Institute for Public Health Innovation  
Justice in Aging  
Keck School of Medicine  
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic  
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, inc.  
Men's Health Network  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Association of Hispanic Nurses  
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)  
National Black Nurses Association  
National Caucus and Center on Black Aging  
National Consumers League  
National Council on Aging  
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID)  
National Grange  
National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA)  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Organization for Rare Disorders  
National Urban League  
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable  
North Carolina Immunization Coalition  
Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation  
Pennsylvania Immunization Coalition  
Retiresafe

Sioux Falls Area Immunization Coalition  
STHealth LLC  
The Arizona Partnership for Immunization  
The Gerontological Society of America  
The Immunization Partnership  
Trust for America's Health  
Tulsa Area Immunization Coalition  
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences  
University of Iowa College of Public Health  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of Wisconsin School of Medicine & Public Health  
UPH-Meriter McKee Clinic Pediatrics  
Utah Adult Immunization Coalition  
Vaccinate Your Family  
Vaccine Ambassadors  
Virginia Barrette  
Walmart  
WV Immunization Network, a program of The Center for Rural Health Development, Inc.  
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

cc:

*Chairman Grassley, Senate Finance Committee*  
*Ranking Member Wyden, Senate Finance Committee*  
*Chairman Pallone, House Energy & Commerce Committee*  
*Ranking Member Walden, House Energy & Commerce Committee*  
*Chairman Neal, House Ways & Means Committee*  
*Ranking Member Brady, House Ways & Means Committee*