



August 12, 2020

The Honorable Chris Murphy
United States Senate
136 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
United States Senate
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murphy and Senator Blunt:

On behalf of the 25 to 30 million Americans with one of the over 7,000 known rare diseases, the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) is pleased to formally endorse S. 4421, the Temporary Reciprocity to Ensure Access to Treatment (TREAT) Act.

NORD is a unique federation of voluntary health organizations dedicated to helping people with rare "orphan" diseases and assisting the organizations that serve them. NORD is committed to the identification, treatment, and cure of rare disorders through programs of education, advocacy, research, and patient services.

NORD believes that all individuals with a rare disease should have access to quality and affordable health care that is best suited to their medical needs. Typically, rare disease patients receive care in hospitals, health centers, and doctors' offices. Due to the specialized nature of the treatment that many rare disease patients require, this often necessitates traveling significant distances, even across state lines, to obtain such care. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, these patients are at higher risk if they were to leave their homes and travel to their usual health care facilities. Therefore, patients and physicians are increasingly utilizing telehealth as a way to keep rare disease patients healthy in the midst of this crisis.

Reducing the barriers associated with state licensure is critically important to ensuring rare disease patients are able to access their out-of-state health care providers via telehealth services while the threat of COVID-19 remains. While most states have adjusted their licensure requirements to enable better telehealth access for patients who live in a different state from their providers, the requirements to provide such care differ greatly from state to state, and as a result patients are still struggling to see their out-of-state health care providers.

The TREAT Act would help ensure rare disease patients are able to access the specialized care they need by allowing temporary reciprocity across the country for health care providers in good standing and with a valid license to practice medicine. NORD is also supportive of the patient protections included in this legislation, particularly the requirements to receive written

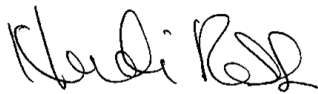
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or oral confirmation from patients before performing telehealth services and the extension of this licensure reciprocity for 180 days after the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

NORD believes that the TREAT Act would help ensure rare disease patients can receive the essential care they need during the COVID-19 pandemic and is pleased to support this important legislation. NORD is grateful for your efforts to address this important issue and urges its swift consideration. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Heidi Ross, NORD's Director of Policy, at (202) 588-5700.

Sincerely,



Heidi Ross
Director of Policy



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