

April 8, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer:

We greatly appreciate your leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and ask for your immediate support to pass legislation which would establish pharmacists on an emergency basis as providers in Medicare Part B in order to provide COVID-19 and flu testing. Providing this authority would go far to rapidly expand access to testing during the national response to this crisis.

With our healthcare system straining to care for the surge in COVID-19 patients, pharmacists should be immediately deployed to expand access to testing for the virus. In rural and underserved communities, and in areas experiencing health care professional shortages, pharmacists may be the only healthcare provider that is immediately accessible to patients. COVID-19 highlights the need for pharmacists to be available on the frontlines of care, particularly for Medicare beneficiaries, who are at the greatest risk of mortality from COVID-19.

We urge you to support utilizing pharmacists to rapidly expand access to testing, by providing this emergency provider status authority as soon as possible. This proposal will ensure that Medicare beneficiaries can receive testing provided by pharmacists and pharmacies. Specifically, the bill would call for the temporary provision of pharmacist services for Medicare beneficiaries, limited to testing for COVID-19 and influenza, to reduce strain on our health care system. This authority would be limited to the duration of public health emergency declared by President Trump on January 31, 2020. Without the changes made in this legislation, Medicare beneficiaries will not be able to benefit from accessible testing provided by pharmacists within communities.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of this important request, to ensure that our nation is responsive to the needs of Medicare beneficiaries impacted by COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American College of Clinical Pharmacy
American Pharmacists Association
American Society of Consultant Pharmacists
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association
National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations
National Association of Chain Drug Stores
National Community Pharmacists Association
National Pharmaceutical Association

CC: The Honorable Frank Pallone, Chairman, House Energy and Commerce Committee
The Honorable Greg Walden, Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee
The Honorable Richard Neal, Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee
The Honorable Kevin Brady, Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Committee
The Honorable Chuck Grassley, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Ron Wyden, Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee
The Hon. Lamar Alexander, Chairman, Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee
The Hon. Patty Murray, Ranking Member, Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee