

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 that 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