



December 13, 2021

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

Dear Majority Leader Schumer:

Thank you for your strong support and leadership in improving access to vaccines for older adults and individuals with chronic conditions who rely on federal programs for vaccine coverage. We are grateful that the Build Back Better Act includes two provisions that will greatly improve access to important preventative vaccines for our most vulnerable populations.

- **Section 139402** would provide first dollar coverage of adult vaccines recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices under Medicare Part D; and
- **Section 139405** would improve access to adult vaccines under Medicaid and CHIP by providing a federal baseline for first dollar coverage and an enhanced FMAP for immunizing providers.

Longstanding inequities in vaccine coverage, particularly for adults, has hindered our nation's disease prevention efforts and put older adults and persons with chronic conditions needlessly at risk of the serious health consequence of vaccine preventable illness. The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare these inequities and last year, Congress rightly made sure that COVID-19 vaccines would be available to everyone with no patient cost-sharing.

Likewise, Section 2713 of the Public Health Service Act (PHS Act) added by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) removed cost-sharing and co-pays for vaccinations recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for all compliant private plans. However, until now, Medicare and some Medicaid beneficiaries were left out of this change, leaving many to face high out-of-pocket costs for vaccinations.

The Build Back Better Act will remedy this longstanding inequity, by eliminating financial barriers to all ACIP recommended vaccines in Medicare Part D and by providing coverage and eliminating cost sharing for adults in traditional Medicaid. **These provisions will go a long way to improve the underlying health of the communities most at risk for COVID-19 and aid the elimination of racial disparities in health care, and are supported by a diverse group of immunization stakeholders.**

Again, we are grateful for your leadership in taking this important step. Members of AVAC stand ready to work with you, because we believe a fully vaccinated public is an investment in our future health, wellbeing and economic success of our nation.

Sincerely,

Adult Vaccine Access Coalition
Alliance for Aging Research
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Behcet's Disease Association (ABDA)
American Lung Association
American Society on Aging
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
Association of Immunization Managers (AIM)
California Immunization Coalition
Caregiver Action Network
Caring Ambassadors Program
Cascade AIDS Project
Dynavax
Families Fighting Flu
Forward Pharmacy
Geriatric Medicine PAs
Global Healthy Living Foundation
HealthHIV
Healthy Men Inc.
HealthyWomen
Hepatitis B Foundation and Hep B United
Hispanic Federation
Idaho Immunization Coalition
Immunize Colorado
Immunize.org (IAC)
ImmunizeTN
Justice in Aging
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic
Kimberly Coffey Foundation
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
National Association Of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Black Nurses Association
National Caucus and Center on Black Aging
National Coalition for LGBTQ Health
National Consumers League
National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH)
National Council on Aging

National Education Association
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR)
North Carolina Immunization Coalition
Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation
RetireSafe
STChealth
The AIDS Institute
The Gerontological Society of America
Triage Cancer
Trust for America's Health
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Vaccinate Your Family
Vaccine Ambassadors
Valneva, USA
VaxCare
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

Cc: Democratic members of the United States Senate