

April 17, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

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

According to NIH, there are 3-5 million men, women, and children in America afflicted with Chronic Lymphatic System Failure, better known by the umbrella term lymphedema.¹ In addition to having permanently impaired immune function,² 1.5-3 million are Medicare beneficiaries, many suffer from one or more comorbidities, and two-thirds are cancer survivors, with some currently undergoing cancer treatment.³

As the devastating impact of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic sweeps our nation, this vulnerable population and the undersigned organizations urge you to include the Lymphedema Treatment Act (H.R.1948 / S.518) in an upcoming COVID-19 response package. These patients are at an even greater risk for infections and other potentially fatal complications when this chronic condition is not properly managed.

As Congress seeks to enact bipartisan solutions to help Americans and support our overburdened healthcare system, preventive care is even more imperative. **This legislation will prevent avoidable hospitalizations and help at-risk seniors stay healthy at home.**

A ten-year longitudinal study of Virginia's lymphedema treatment mandate demonstrated an over a 40% reduction in physician and therapy visits, and a greater than 50% reduction in hospitalizations.⁴ This coverage has proven to improve patient outcomes and quality of life, reduce utilization, and reduce costs.

The Lymphedema Treatment Act has broad bipartisan support with 382 House and 70 Senate cosponsors. It has already been passed in the House of Representatives as part of H.R.3, but given the urgency of ensuring that these at-risk patients have access to clinically prescribed treatment supplies to manage their condition at home, this cannot wait for a return to regular order.

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3652571/#R1>

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6361763/>

³ <https://lymphedematreatmentact.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Lymphedema-Not-One-Disease.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5010541/>

This legislation will directly help lymphedema patients remain healthy and avoid unnecessary hospitalizations and other complications at a time when reducing the burden on our health care system is the highest priority, and we hope you will see that it is included in one of the upcoming COVID-19 response packages.

Sincerely,

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Sen. Chuck Grassley, Chair, Committee on Finance

Sen. Ron Wyden, Ranking Member, Committee on Finance

Rep. Frank Pallone, Chair, Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. Greg Walden, Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. Richard Neal, Chair, Committee on Ways and Means

Rep. Kevin Brady, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means

Sen. Maria Cantwell, Committee on Finance

Sen. Todd Young, Committee on Finance

Rep. Jan Schakowsky Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. Buddy Carter, Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. Earl Blumenauer, Committee on Ways and Means

Rep. Mike Kelly, Committee on Ways and Means