

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

November 19, 2024

Dear Senator / Representative

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to work with Democratic leadership and the committees of jurisdiction to address a number of health care priorities in must-pass legislation during the lame duck session. As you know, these legislative vehicles represent a last chance to address many issues before Republican lawmakers take control of both chambers of Congress next year.

There are a number of pressing issues that must be addressed as Congress considers end-of-year legislation:

- **Biden-Harris administration rule establishing minimum staffing standards for nursing homes.** Any lame duck health care package must protect this standard which will save patient lives and grow the nursing workforce. Provisions that would delay or rescind the rule's implementation and enforcement must be excluded.
- **Provide steady health care funding for 9/11 first responders and survivors.** The 9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act (S. 4724, H.R. 9101) must be passed before the end of the year to ensure 9/11 victims are able to acquire coverage and to fend off service cuts that will result if funding formula problems are not addressed.
- **Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) price transparency requirements.** Provisions included in the Lower Costs, More Transparency Act (H.R. 5378) require that PBMs provide data to health plans, enabling more effective negotiations with PBMs and lower prices and premiums for consumers.
- **Community Health Center (CHC) Reauthorization.** Congress must reauthorize the CHC program and increase funding for these centers that provide primary care to 31 million lower-income and rural patients.
- **Stave off Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) cuts.** DSH payments support safety-net hospitals that provide care to large numbers of low-income and uninsured people. It is important that DSH payments not be reduced.
- **Extend enhanced Affordable Care Act (ACA) premium credits.** Extending the premium credits will prevent approximately 4 million people from losing marketplace coverage due to premium increases.
- **Expand health care workforce protections.** Including the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act (S. 1176, H.R. 2663) and the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Reauthorization Act (S. 3679, H.R. 7153) in a package will provide for safe treatment settings and mental health supports for clinical staff.

- **Curb patent abuses by brand pharmaceutical drug makers.** Consumer savings will result from including the Affordable Prescriptions for Patients Act (S. 150) to limit monopoly abuses such as “patent thickets” and “product hopping.” It is also important to pass the Preserve Access to Affordable Generics and Biosimilars Act (S. 142) to ban pay-for-delay agreements that limit access to less expensive generic medicines.

We look forward to working with you to address these issues in legislation considered before the end of this session of Congress. This is an important opportunity to address health care affordability issues and build the health care workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jody Calemine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jody" being more prominent and the last name "Calemine" following in a similar style.

Jody Calemine
Director, Government Affairs