

December 9, 2020

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

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-222 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
S-221 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

Our organizations, representing millions of American providers, patients, and consumers, write today to urge you to include the Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act, HR 1570/S 668, in the year end legislative package.

This bill has 344 cosponsors in the House and 61 cosponsors in the Senate and will encourage more people to get screened for colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer is the second deadliest cancer in this country and in 2020, it is estimated that 147,950 Americans will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer and approximately 53,200 Americans will die from it.¹

Medicare covers screening colonoscopies for beneficiaries without any cost-sharing. However, it requires seniors to pay 20 percent coinsurance if polyps are found and removed during that screening. Importantly, people with private insurance do not face this same cost barrier. Enactment of the Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act would remove this financial barrier to screening.

It is important that Medicare-eligible seniors be screened for colorectal cancer. Approximately 60 percent of cases and 70 percent of deaths due to colorectal cancer occur in those aged 65 years and older.² Colonoscopies are proven to prevent and detect colorectal cancer at earlier stages when treatment is more effective and can save lives. The five-year relative survival rate for colorectal cancer is only 14 percent when caught at a later stage. If caught at an early stage with screening, the survival rate improves to 90 percent.³

Please include the Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act, HR 1570/S 668, in the year end legislative package. For more information, please direct your staff to contact Stephanie Krenrich at the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network at stephanie.krenrich@cancer.org.

¹ Ibid.

² Siegel RL, Miller KD, Fedewa SA, et al. Colorectal cancer statistics, 2017. *CA Cancer J Clin.* 2017; 76(3): 177-93.

³ American Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts and Figures 2019*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2019.

Sincerely,

Academy of Oncology Nurse and Patient Navigators
AliveAndKickn
Alliance for Aging Research
Ambulatory Surgery Center Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Gastroenterology
American College of Radiology
American Gastroenterological Association
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
Association for Oncology Social Work
California Colorectal Cancer Coalition
Cancer Support Community
CancerCare
Colon Cancer Coalition
Colon Cancer Foundation
COLONTOWN, a PALTOWN Community
Colorado Cancer Coalition
Colorectal Cancer Alliance
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
Digestive Disease National Coalition
Families USA
Fight Colorectal Cancer
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
GI Cancers Alliance
Great Plains Colon Cancer Task Force
Hitting Cancer Below the Belt
International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders
Kiel Colon Cancer Foundation
Michael's Mission
Nebraska Cancer Coalition
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Raymond Foundation
The Blue Hat Foundation
The Colon Club
United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc.
Washington Colon Cancer Stars