



August 19, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy,

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) supports research to improve health care quality, reduce costs, advance patient safety, decrease medical errors, and broaden access to essential services. As the lead federal agency for funding health services research, AHRQ is the bridge between cures and care, and ensures that Americans get the best health care at the best value. While the vast majority of federally funded research focuses on one specific disease or organ system, AHRQ is the only federal agency that funds research at universities and other research institutions throughout the nation on health systems—the “real-life” patient who has complex comorbidities, the interoperability of different technological advances, and the interactions and intersections of health care providers.

Our nation’s health care system is facing unprecedented challenges and strains as it reacts to the COVID-19 pandemic and cares for millions of infected patients. Over 160,000 Americans have died from this disease already, and many more are facing severe complications as they recover. This pandemic has also laid bare the deep racial and ethnic inequities in health care as people of color are disproportionately being infected and suffering worse outcomes.

COVID-19 is a watershed moment, and the United States health care system must quickly learn and adapt so that we can better care for those affected from this pandemic, and to more quickly and effectively respond to future outbreaks. AHRQ is the vehicle for that learning. It is critical that we quickly and carefully conduct research assessments of the health care system’s responses to the pandemic, and identify successful and scalable measures to protect Americans. AHRQ has the expertise and experience to conduct those evaluations.

**For this reason, the 95 undersigned members of the Friends of AHRQ are proud to endorse Congressman Don Beyer’s AHRQ Funding Bill, H.R. 8067, and urge its rapid consideration and passage.**

This bill would direct AHRQ to conduct or support research on the most critical health system issues for COVID-19, including:

- The expansion and efficacy of telehealth, including identifying obstacles to access for veterans, the elderly, and communities of low-socioeconomic status.
- Evaluating and identifying potential weaknesses in the health system that increase racial and ethnic disparities in COVID-19 infection rates and develop strategies for mitigating them.
- Creating protocols that ensure that vulnerable groups have timely access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, informed by the existing racial and ethnic disparities in COVID-19 infection rates and health outcomes.



Rep. Beyer's legislation will ensure that health care and health policy decision makers have the information they need to build a health care system that works effectively for everyone. AHRQ has the proven track record of creating pipelines of new medical findings reaching health care providers and patients, and providing them with the tools and training they need every day, and this bill provides AHRQ with resources it needs to take on the COVID-19 crisis.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses (AMSN)  
AcademyHealth  
Alliance for Aging Research  
AMDA - The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine  
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology  
American Academy of Dermatology Association  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Association for Dental Research  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Association of Post-Acute Care Nursing  
American Association of Public Health Dentistry  
American Board of Medical Specialties  
American Chiropractic Association  
American College of Clinical Pharmacy  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Preventative Medicine  
American Health Information Management Association  
American Health Quality Association  
American Heart Association  
American Organization for Nursing Leadership  
American Physical Therapy Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society of Hematology  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology  
American Society of Plastic Surgeons  
Arbor Research Collaborative for Health  
Association for Clinical and Translational Science  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors  
Association of Population Centers  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health



Brown University  
Clinical Research Forum  
Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science  
Columbia University Irving Medical Center  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Council on Social Work Education  
EBQ Consulting, LLC  
ECRI  
Eta Sigma Gamma  
Federation of American Hospitals  
Global Healthy Living Foundation  
Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)  
Healthcare Systems Research Network  
Heart Failure Society of America  
Heart Rhythm Society  
Healthcare Systems Research Network  
HIV Medicine Association  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Johns Hopkins University  
Kaiser Permanente  
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.  
March of Dimes  
Morehouse School of Medicine  
Mothers Against Medical Error  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Athletic Trainers' Association  
National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care  
National Infusion Center Association (NICA)  
NextGen Healthcare  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA)  
Personal Connected Health Alliance (PCHAlliance)  
Population Association of America  
Research!America  
RTI International  
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine  
Society for Participatory Medicine  
Society for Women's Health Research  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
Spina Bifida Association  
The American College of Preventive Medicine  
The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology  
The Leapfrog Group  
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons



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