

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 31, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
House of Representatives
Washington, DC, 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer:

Thank you for your leadership in securing necessary resources for communities and states in previous stimulus packages. In the midst of the nation's most acute health care crisis in the last century, we must ensure everyone has guaranteed health care. Coupled with the historic levels of unemployment and economic instability, an estimated 5.4 million people around the country have lost their employer-based health insurance coverage, joining the roughly 30 million uninsured individuals at the outset of the crisis.¹ Millions of people have fallen into the coverage gaps and cannot access Medicaid, COBRA, or the ACA marketplace. Allowing people to lose their health insurance in the midst of a public health pandemic is completely unacceptable. This is why we introduced H.R. 6674, The Medicare Crisis Program Act, to expand our country's reliable and effective public health insurance programs to provide health security for our unemployed and uninsured. We must do more to ensure everyone has the health services they need.

Therefore, we are writing to urge you to include the following key provisions from H.R. 6674, The Medicare Crisis Program Act, in the next stimulus package:

- **Expand traditional Medicare to any uninsured person and their dependents who experienced a loss or reduction in employment during the COVID-19 crisis.** In addition to expanded eligibility, H.R. 6674 includes expanded coverage under the Medicare program. In order to guarantee that no one will experience additional financial hardship, we must ensure Medicare coverage without cost-sharing for COVID-19 testing and treatment, regardless of a positive or negative test result for COVID-19, and provide coverage for all other services premium-free and with an out-of-pocket cap.
- **Guarantee coverage through Medicare until the economy recovers.** H.R. 6674 defines economic recovery at the state level and federal level as the quarterly unemployment rate reaching 2% as of the last quarter of 2019, calculated as a 12-month

¹Sheryl Gay Stolberg, *Millions Have Lost Health Insurance in Pandemic-Driven Recession*, NY Times (July 13, 2020). <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/13/us/politics/coronavirus-health-insurance-trump.html>

rolling average. Furthermore, we need to provide three months of transitional coverage so everyone can continue services when the transition occurs.

Medicare has the largest network of providers in the country and is one of the most affordable and accessible health insurance programs in the country. Therefore, by ensuring coverage for recently unemployed people through Medicare, not only do we improve health and economic security for millions, but we can gather critical data and information needed to provide a robust COVID-19 response.

As this pandemic persists and the number of COVID-19 cases increase rapidly, the number of unemployment claims will continue to rise. The Medicare Crisis Program Act would guarantee healthcare for millions of people struggling with the health and economic realities of the COVID-19 pandemic. It protects Americans from outrageous out-of-pocket costs and removes the financial burden when seeking care. We cannot allow those who are unemployed to face any additional hardships and we must do everything we can to protect them. Therefore, Congress should move for immediate inclusion of the Medicare Crisis Program Act into the next stimulus package.

Sincerely,



PRAMILA JAYAPAL
Member of Congress

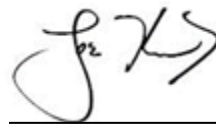
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