



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

May 3, 2021

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

We write to you today to express our strong interest in working collaboratively in a bipartisan manner with our colleagues in the Senate and with the Biden Administration to develop healthcare policies that will deliver on President Biden's promise to defend and build upon the Affordable Care Act, to ensure that patients are able to afford their medicine at the pharmacy counter, and to enhance the United States' innovation ecosystem that delivers treatments and cures when we need them most, as we've seen throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Access to and affordability of healthcare continue to be top of mind for families in our districts and across the country. The American Rescue Plan contained important improvements to the Affordable Care Act—expansions of coverage and access to subsidies that will ensure Americans get the care they need when they need it. Too many Americans are either uninsured or underinsured, a circumstance borne most acutely in communities of color, and the system continues to bear too much risk. As a result, premiums are difficult for families to afford¹. Further, whether they're insured or not, too many families are forced to make difficult decisions about the medicines they need because they're paying too much at the pharmacy counter. These issues are not new, but they have certainly been laid bare by the pandemic.

To that end, as the country recovers from the health and economic crises, health legislation that Congress pursues should make patient affordability the number one goal, whether it's the cost of premiums and co-pays, price of medicines, or expense of care. To achieve that goal, the stakeholders in health care delivery must come together, working with our congressional committees of jurisdiction, to determine ways to better serve patients in an efficient and affordable fashion with an eye toward improving health equity. Through this collaboration we can ensure that stakeholders across the health care system each bear responsibility to improve costs for patients and their families.

As we look beyond the pandemic, the Biden Administration has laid out an ambitious vision for improving our health care system, most notably in setting the goal of ending cancer as we know it. As we have just seen with the lifesaving, record-breaking development of COVID-19 vaccines and therapies, America benefits from the most innovative and capable researchers in the world, and from public-private partnership that encourages world-leading biomedical research and development. President Biden's initiative to stimulate cancer research and cures will be successful if the federal government leverages and rewards expertise from across the public and private sectors in order to assure that advancements in cancer therapies actually make

¹ <https://www.kff.org/uninsured/issue-brief/key-facts-about-the-uninsured-population/>

it to patients. In many countries around the world where these partnerships are lacking, effective cancer treatments may not be realized by the patient community for an extended period of time². There is a balance between innovation and affordability, but we believe there must be solutions for both in order for President Biden's cancer agenda to be successful for patients and their families. This logic applies, as well, to the other great biomedical moonshot: Alzheimer's therapeutics.

Finally as you know, it is imperative that we pass legislation that can reach the President's desk to deliver on our promise of bringing down health care costs for the American people. To achieve this, we must garner bipartisan, bicameral support, with buy-in from a majority of Americans and stakeholders in the public and private sectors. If this pandemic has taught us anything, it's that we all, truly, must be in this together. We sincerely hope that the House will join with our Senate counterparts and the Biden Administration to lead the way in crafting health care legislation that will lower costs across the board for patients, expand access to coverage and care, preserve our invaluable innovation ecosystem so that it can continue to prevent and treat disease, and assure that the act of legislating is bipartisan and meaningful.

Sincerely,



Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress

Additional signers below:

Rep. Kurt Schrader
Rep. Kathleen Rice
Rep. Stephanie Murphy
Rep. Lou Correa
Rep. Marilyn Strickland
Rep. Frank Mrvan
Rep. Josh Gottheimer
Rep. Tony Cardenas

² <https://www.wsj.com/articles/why-are-drugs-cheaper-in-europe-1540760855>