

April 21, 2023

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker McCarthy, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the 124 undersigned organizations representing patients, providers, and public health organizations, we urge Congress to adopt legislation to eliminate hepatitis C. There are very few opportunities for the health care community and Congress to partner to eliminate a devastating disease, but hepatitis C presents one. With an oral medication that cures over 95 percent of patients in just 8 to 12 weeks, the tools are available to save the lives of many Americans if Congress acts now.

At least 2.4 million people in the United States are chronically infected with hepatitis C, a “silent killer.” Chronically infected individuals may be asymptomatic for years while the virus damages their liver. Left undetected and untreated, hepatitis C may progress to cirrhosis, liver cancer, and potentially even death. Liver transplantation is the only rescue therapy available to those who develop the complications related to cirrhosis, but is an expensive and limited option. Every year, one of every five persons on the waiting list for liver transplantation, die or become too sick to undergo the transplant. Diagnosis and treatment of hepatitis C can avoid all those downstream consequences—for every one million people cured of hepatitis C in ten years, 34,000 cases of liver cancer, 2,500 liver transplants, and 24,000 deaths can be prevented.

The high number of individuals unaware of their disease status, the barriers to screening and treatment, and the cost of these medications are the primary impediments to hepatitis C elimination. However, Congress can act to address these challenges, save the lives of many Americans with hepatitis C, and reduce the significant health costs associated with treating patients with liver cancer and liver transplants.

President Biden’s Fiscal Year 2024 budget request outlines a plan to eliminate this curable this virus by:

- Supporting the development of point-of-care diagnostic tests to enable a test-to-treat model;
- Broadening access to curative hepatitis C medications, primarily through a national subscription model; and
- Expanding infrastructure needed to reach, test, and treat all affected individuals.

Besides these components, the plan would also accelerate research to find a safe and effective vaccine for hepatitis C, so that the next generation of Americans will be protected from this serious disease. The

White House requested a mandatory authorization—an investment of \$12.3 billion—for five years. This investment will be offset by \$7.2 billion in savings, primarily by the reduced Medicaid program and drug costs, for a net cost of \$5.1 billion and incalculable benefit to the millions of lives that will be saved, particularly among our most vulnerable populations who are disproportionately affected by this virus. We have seen a similar approach taken by the state of Louisiana that has made a great deal of impact in reducing the number of people with hepatitis C.

This plan provides a blueprint to save lives and reduce federal healthcare spending. The time to act is now before hepatitis C progresses to more costly and complicated liver diseases for many Americans. We stand ready to work with you to eliminate hepatitis C for all Americans and respectfully request that Congress develop and pass legislation to authorize this hepatitis C elimination plan immediately.

Sincerely,

American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases  
Access Support Network  
Africell SL  
AIDS Alabama  
AIDS United  
Albuquerque Health Care for the Homeless  
American Academy of HIV Medicine  
American Association of College of Pharmacy  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American College of Gastroenterology  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Liver Foundation  
American Pharmacists Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Society of Transplant Surgeons  
American Society of Transplantation  
APLA Health  
Arizona Liver Health  
Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association at the University of Texas Medical Branch  
Asiana Liver Center at Stanford University  
Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies  
Association of Accredited Naturopathic Medical Colleges  
Association of Schools & Programs of Public Health  
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials  
Bienestar Human Services  
Black Coalition Against COVID  
Breadcrumb Analytics  
California Hepatitis Alliance  
California Hepatitis C Task Force  
Caring Ambassadors Program

Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation  
Central City Concern  
Check Hep C at Montefiore Medical Center  
Choose Healthy Life  
Clary Strategies  
Coalition for Global Hepatitis Elimination at The Task Force for Global Health  
Community Access National Network  
Community Education Group  
Community Liver Alliance  
Council of Medical Specialty Societies  
CWJ PLUS, LLC.  
DAP Health  
Empire Liver Foundation  
End Hep C SF  
Facente Consulting  
Faces & Voices of Recovery  
Global Immunization Action Network Team (GIANT)  
Global Liver Institute  
Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center  
Health Brigade  
Health Services Center, Inc.  
Hennepin Healthcare  
Hep Free Hawai'i  
Hepatitis B Foundation  
Hepatitis C Association  
Hepatitis C Task Force for Los Angeles County  
Hepatitis Education Project (HEP)  
Hepatitis Education, Awareness and Liver Support or H.E.A.L.S of the South  
HepFree KY  
HIV Medicine Association  
Hope on Ttapp  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
International Association of Hepatitis Task Forces  
International Network on Health and Hepatitis in Substance Users (INHSU)  
Joy Southfield Community Development Corporation  
Kaleida Health  
Kentucky Rural Health Association, Inc.  
La Maestra Community Health Centers  
Legacy Community Health  
Liver Coalition of San Diego  
Liver Health Initiative  
Mid South Liver Alliance  
Midwest Asian Health Association  
Milken Institute

Missouri Network for Opiate Reform and Recovery  
National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors  
National AIDS Treatment Advocacy Project  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Clinician Consultation Center  
National Consumers League  
National Harm Reduction Coalition  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable  
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
New York Recovery Alliance  
NEXT Distro  
North American Society For Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Nutrition  
Northwestern Medicine  
Ohio Hepatitis Academic Mentorship Program (OH-HAMP)  
Open Biopharma Research and Training Institute  
Pharmacist planning service  
Project ECHO: Hawaii Learning Groups  
Project Weber/RENEW  
Providence Centralia Hospital  
Public Health Division - Oregon Health Authority  
Radiant Health Centers  
Rady Children's Hospital/University of California San Diego  
Safer Together  
San Francisco AIDS Foundation  
San Francisco Department of Public Health  
Sonoran Prevention Works  
Southwest Recovery Alliance  
Sun River Health  
Sunray Drugs Specialty  
The AIDS Institute  
The Bonnie Morgan Foundation for HCV  
The Giving Back Foundation  
The Hepatitis C Mentor and Support Group-HCMSG  
The Porchlight Collective SAP  
Thomas D. Boyer Liver Institute, University of Arizona  
Treatment Action Group  
Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community  
University at Buffalo, The State University of New York  
University of New Mexico  
UNM Medical Group, Inc.  
Urban Survivors Union  
Utah Hepatitis Coalition  
VOCAL-WA

West Virginia Hepatitis Academic Mentoring Partnership  
Will Rodgers Liver Health Foundation  
Women of a Certain Age  
Yakima Neighborhood Health Services

cc: Chair Ron Wyden, Senate Finance Committee  
Ranking Member Mike Crapo, Senate Finance Committee  
Chair Bernie Sanders, Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
Ranking Member Bill Cassidy, Senate Health Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
Chair Patty Murray, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Vice Chair Susan Collins, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Chair Dick Durbin, Senate Judiciary Committee  
Ranking Member Lindsey Graham, Senate Judiciary Committee  
Chair Jason Smith, House Ways & Means Committee  
Ranking Member Richard Neal, House Ways & Means Committee  
Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers, House Energy & Commerce Committee  
Ranking Member Frank Pallone, House Energy & Commerce Committee  
Chair Kay Granger, House Appropriations Committee  
Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro, House Appropriations Committee  
Chair Jim Jordan, House Judiciary Committee  
Ranking Member Jerrold Nadler, House Judiciary Committee