

February 8, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

Dear Leaders Schumer, McConnell, Pelosi and McCarthy,

As the Congress and our nation continue to respond to the public health emergency that is overtaking our nation, members of AVAC join with partners and allies to ask that the Immunization Infrastructure Modernization Act (H.R. 550) be considered as part of any next Covid-19 response package.

Immunizations are essential to protecting individuals across the life course from vaccine-preventable diseases and outbreaks. The ability to exchange immunization information across multiple jurisdictions has the ability to improve immunization rates, saving lives and dollars. Immunization Information Systems (IIS) are an essential tool for achieving this, informing providers of the vaccines a patient needs and when they need them. During past pandemics and natural disasters, IIS have been able to respond to the unique and pressing issues that these public health emergencies present for affected communities. However, IIS vary across states in terms of their capabilities and the breadth of patient information contained.

The Immunization Infrastructure Modernization Act would provide much needed resources for IIS modernization and enhancements, and provide a desperately needed “shot in the arm” to successfully meet existing federal health goals as well as the future challenges of a mass pandemic vaccination campaign. Providing federal support and guidance to Health departments and health care providers at the state and local level to strengthen IIS, and to the health care information framework, would enable a successful response to a future pandemic vaccine, as well as manage “routine” immunization efforts and outbreaks of other vaccine preventable diseases, which could be happening simultaneously.

Now is the time to streamline policies across states and localities to facilitate the secure and confidential sharing of immunization record data across IIS’ jurisdictions on a more permanent basis. This would reduce immunization gaps, empower providers, and integrate immunization data into 21st-century health systems.

Again, we ask for your support for inclusion of Immunization Infrastructure Modernization Act. Our organizations stand ready to work with you on this, and other important and effective solutions around vaccines.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Pediatrics

American College of Physicians

American Heart Association

American Lung Association

American Immunization Registry Association

American Pharmacists Association

American Public Health Association

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)

Association of Immunization Managers

Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology

Biotechnology Innovation Organization

Dynavax

Families Fighting Flu

GSK

Hep B United

Hepatitis B Foundation

Immunization Action Coalition

Infectious Diseases Society of America

Kimberly Coffey Foundation

Medicago

Moderna

National Association of County and City Health Officials

National Consumers League

National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable

Public Health Informatics Institute

Seqirus

STChealth

The Gerontological Society of America

Trust for America's Health

Vaccinate Your Family