



90 Years of Caring for Children—1930–2020

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August 13, 2020

The Honorable Lauren Underwood
U.S. House of Representatives
1118 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Underwood:

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of more than 67,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical subspecialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I am writing to share our support for the *Community Immunity During COVID-19 Act of 2020*.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, immunization rates among children have fallen dramatically. Unfortunately, this decline in immunizations raises the possibility of a secondary outbreak of infectious disease during the pandemic. To ensure that children and adolescents are still receiving routine immunizations, AAP is strongly advocating for continued and strengthened investment in the existing immunization delivery system and efforts to combat vaccine hesitancy and misinformation around existing vaccinations as well as an eventual COVID-19 vaccine when one is available. Therefore, we support the goal of the *Community Immunity During COVID-19 Act of 2020* to develop, scale, and evaluate local initiatives to promote recommended vaccinations during this pandemic.

This bill would provide \$560 million to state and local public health departments to promote Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices-recommended vaccinations during the COVID-19 public health emergency. It would do so by strengthening partnerships with local stakeholders such as health care providers and schools, disseminating information through online platforms including social media, and conducting outreach to promote health insurance options and immunization programs like Vaccines for Children, among other efforts. It would also fund the development and dissemination of vaccine counseling guidance for community immunization providers to be able to effectively communicate with patients about a COVID-19 vaccine once one has been approved.

Thank you for your commitment to protecting children, adolescents, and communities across the country from vaccine-preventable diseases. The AAP is pleased to support the *Community Immunity During COVID-19 Act of 2020*, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to improve the well-being of our nation's children.

Sincerely,

Sara H. Goza, MD, FAAP
President

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