



December 6, 2021

The Honorable Maize Hirono (D-HI)
U.S. Senate
109 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)
U.S. Senate
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)
U.S. Senate
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tim Scott (R-SC)
U.S. Senate
104 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators, Hirono, Capito, Whitehouse and Scott:

We are writing today to endorse your bi-partisan bill *Protecting Seniors Through Immunization Act of 2021* (S. 912). The bill eliminates cost barriers for seniors to get the preventative vaccines that they need. The Council for Affordable Health Coverage (CAHC, www.cahc.net) is a broad-based alliance with a primary focus: bringing down the cost of health care for all Americans. CAHC promotes policies that lower health costs through increased competition, informed consumers, and more choices. Our members include medical providers, patient groups, insurers, pharmaceutical manufacturers, pharmacy benefit managers, and employers.

The pandemic has not only illustrated, but made fundamentally obvious, the necessity of vaccine access. The annual flu vaccine is estimated to prevent around 7.5 million¹ cases each year. This reduces doctor visits by 40-60 percent, or 3.7 million influenza-associated medical visits and 105,000 influenza-associated hospitalizations, leading to lower medical costs.² It has been estimated that the common seasonal flu costs the U.S. \$87 billion annually, which can be partly avoided through better access, particularly for seniors, who are at greater risk.³

A measles outbreak in a state can cost, at minimum, \$1.3 million. To contain a whooping cough outbreak in a school can cost that school district \$52,000.⁴ With the final cost of the pandemic still unknown, it is clear the savings that preventative measures such as vaccinees can bring are significant. Eliminating cost sharing barriers will save money both for patients and their families and taxpayers.

Again, thank you for your efforts in introducing the *Protecting Seniors Through Vaccination Act of 2021*. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at joel.white@cahc.net or 202-559-0192.

Sincerely,

Joel C. White
President, CAHC

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/vaccines-work/vaccineeffect.htm>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/vaccines-work/vaccineeffect.htm>

³ <https://www.cdcfoundation.org/pr/flu-costs-United-States-87-billion-annually>

⁴ <https://vaccinateyourfamily.org/why-vaccinate/vaccine-benefits/costs-of-disease-outbreaks/>