



October 31, 2019

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor & Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor & Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

The Healthcare Leadership Council (HLC) appreciates the opportunity to share its thoughts with you on several bills being considered today by the Health, Education, Labor, Pensions (HELP) Committee.

HLC is a coalition of chief executives from all disciplines within American healthcare. It is the exclusive forum for the nation's healthcare leaders to jointly develop policies, plans, and programs to achieve their vision of a 21st century healthcare system that makes affordable high-quality care accessible to all Americans. Members of HLC – hospitals, academic health centers, health plans, pharmaceutical companies, medical device manufacturers, laboratories, biotech firms, health product distributors, post-acute care providers, home care providers, and information technology companies – advocate for measures to increase the quality and efficiency of healthcare through a patient centered approach.

Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2019 (S. 1399)

Nurses play a critical role in providing support and care for patients. As many nurses retire and baby boomers continue to increase medical care demand in communities across America, the nursing workforce is at a critical juncture. To help meet these needs, HLC supports S. 1399, the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2019 as it reauthorizes several important workforce programs which advance nursing education, practice, recruitment, and retention.

Promoting Physical Activity for Americans Act (S. 1608)

Obesity is a top risk factor for many chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and certain cancers. Obesity can be treated through dietary changes, increasing exercise and activity, behavior change, prescription weight loss medications, and weight loss surgery. Increased physical activity or exercise is an essential part of obesity treatment. The Promoting Physical Activity for Americans Act, S. 1608 would

direct the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to prepare and promote physical activity recommendations based on the latest scientific evidence at least every ten years and direct HHS, five years after the release of each set of recommendations, to publish a midcourse report highlighting best practices and continuing issues relating to physical activity. Given the strong base of science and research that shows the benefits of exercise, every American needs to know the current physical activity recommendations to promote health and combat obesity which in turn will lower healthcare costs.

United States Public Health Service Modernization Act of 2019 (S. 2629)

As people with chronic conditions or functional limitations are especially vulnerable during disasters, HLC strongly supports S. 2629, the United States Public Health Service Modernization Act of 2019. This legislation will ensure ample numbers of healthcare personnel are on hand to respond to national disasters and emergencies by creating a Ready Reserve Corps within the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. Additionally, HLC is already working with leaders at HHS and other federal agencies to share information and ideas on disaster response strategies and capabilities, working to ensure the continuing operation of healthcare facilities as well as production and distribution of critical supplies during times of catastrophe. This bill builds upon HLC's current work and helps address the needs of patients more effectively in the time of a national emergency.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation. HLC looks forward to continuing to collaborate with you on these important issues. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Debbie Witchey at (202) 449-3435 or dwitchey@hlc.org.

Sincerely,



Mary R. Grealy
President