



February 24, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Health, Education, Labor & Pensions
Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr
Ranking Member
Health, Education, Labor & Pensions
Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Burr,

On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), which represents 136,700 family physicians and medical students across the country, I write to [again](#) support the nomination of Vivek Murthy, M.D., M.B.A. for the position of Surgeon General of the United States. Dr. Murthy is a well-respected physician with decades of public health experience, who will again serve the country well in this role.

As an internal medicine physician, Dr. Murthy knows firsthand the important role that primary care physicians play in ensuring access, addressing health disparities, and has been a strong advocate supporting high quality affordable care for all. All of these have been long-time priorities of the AAFP.

In November 2019, Dr. Murthy was named co-chair of the COVID-19 Advisory Board to help the incoming Biden administration coordinate its response to the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE). In this capacity, he helped develop the federal government's pandemic response and speed up vaccine production and distribution, which AAFP has advocated for as well as the inclusion of primary care in vaccine distribution. This experience will allow Dr. Murthy to immediately help lead the federal government's response to the ongoing pandemic.

Dr. Murthy previously served as the Surgeon General from 2014 to 2017. During this time, Dr. Murthy lead several public health initiatives to improve the nation's overall health, including the national response to the opioid crisis, the rising use of e-cigarettes, and mental health challenges. He also led the U.S. Public Health Service and its Commissioned Corps, managing the nation's response to Ebola and Zika as well as the Flint, MI drinking water crisis.

In Dr. Murthy's career as the 19th Surgeon General, a physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital, and as an instructor at Harvard Medical School, he has demonstrated many important leadership qualities that will contribute to his success as the 21st Surgeon General. Perhaps the two most important are a clear belief in the importance of preventive health and the ability to communicate the principles of effective health care to a wide and diverse population. As the "nation's doctor," the Surgeon General is particularly important in bringing to Americans the message of preventive health. With Dr. Murthy's active role on the National Advisory Group on Prevention, Health Promotion and Integrative and Public Health, he has shown his ability and commitment to deliver that message, and to do so effectively.

STRONG MEDICINE FOR AMERICA

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Dr. Murthy is an innovative leader, who has established two non-profit organizations to promote health care and one technology company to improve the quality and efficiency of clinical trials. By showing that he has the skills needed to bridge generations and diverse groups of people, he will be a Surgeon General who will appeal to Americans of all ages and cultural backgrounds.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support for the nomination of Dr. Murthy for Surgeon General. If you have additional questions, please reach out to John Aguilar, Manager of Legislative Affairs, at jaguilar@aafp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary L. LeRoy, MD, FAAFP". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "G" and "L".

Gary L. LeRoy, MD, FAAFP

Board Chair

American Academy of Family Physicians