



January 22, 2021

The Honorable Tina Smith
U.S. Senate
720 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Senator Smith and Representative Underwood,

As the Congress and our nation continue to respond to the public health emergency that is overtaking our country, members of the Adult Vaccine Access Coalition (AVAC) thank you for introducing the Community Immunity During COVID-19 Act.

This legislation would provide robust funding to develop, scale, and evaluate local initiatives to promote recommended vaccinations during this pandemic. These investments are particularly important for building confidence around the COVID-19 vaccines now that two have been proven to be safe and effective.

Immunizations are essential to protecting individuals across the life course from vaccine-preventable diseases and outbreaks. At risk populations, including older adults, persons with disabilities, and those living with chronic health conditions such as heart and lung disease, diabetes, and cancer, are extremely vulnerable and at increased risk of suffering from the serious adverse health consequences of vaccine preventable illnesses. Your important legislation will provide a heightened focus on addressing vaccination hesitancy concerns and increase public confidence in the safety and efficacy of vaccines as a potentially lifesaving medical countermeasure.

It is critical to continue communication and engagement with the public on the need to continue to stay up to date with the immunization schedules recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), including the receipt of vaccinations for flu, pneumococcal disease, shingles, and hepatitis. At the same time, it is necessary to be educating and encouraging our most vulnerable populations to seek access to Covid-19 vaccines. Doing so will address the long-standing disparities around adult vaccines.

Again, thank you for your steadfast leadership around immunizations during this difficult time. Members of AVAC stand ready to work with you on important and effective solutions.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Aging Research
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Immunization Registry Association
American Lung Association
American Pharmacists Association
American Public Health Association
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Families Fighting Flu
GSK
Hepatitis B Foundation
Hep B United
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Kimberly Coffey Foundation
March of Dimes
Medicago
Moderna
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Consumers League
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable
Novavax
Seqirus
STChealth
The AIDS Institute
The Gerontological Society of America
Trust for America's Health
Vaccinate Your Family
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease