

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

We write to you regarding our concerns with the Biden Administration's and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) final rule mandating COVID-19 vaccines for health care providers and respectfully request immediate consideration of H.J. Res 67, introduced by Representative Jeff Duncan on December 9, 2021. This important measure would invoke the Congressional Review Act to roll back CMS's rule related to "Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination."

During the entirety of the pandemic, America's healthcare workforce showed selfless courage and continued to go to work every day to provide critical services to Americans in need of quality care. Many of these healthcare professionals who were praised as "frontline heroes" just one year ago, now face scrutiny for their deeply personal decision to not be vaccinated.

In a January 13 statement, CMS Administrator Brooks-LaSure justified moving forward with its vaccine mandate saying, "Health care staff being unable to work because of illness or exposure to COVID-19 further strains the health care system and limits patient access to safe and essential care."^[1]

However, this irresponsible mandate runs counter to the goal of ensuring access to quality care by forcing healthcare providers to choose between firing large chunks of their workforce or enduring crippling penalties that put essential Medicare and Medicaid funding at risk. Either way, these providers are losing and so are the millions of Americans who rely on the care they provide, especially in rural communities where access to health care services is sometimes limited to begin with. More than 135 rural hospitals have closed since 2010 with an additional 450 classified as vulnerable to closure.^[2]

The consequences of this one-size-fits-all mandate, notably the exodus of qualified healthcare professionals from the workforce and rapid decline of rural healthcare options, outweigh any of the benefits outlined by CMS and the Biden Administration. This rule only stands to worsen an already difficult issue.

^[1] <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/statement-cms-administrator-chiquita-brooks-lasure-us-supreme-courts-decision-vaccine-requirements>

^[2] <https://www.ruralhealth.us/blogs/ruralhealthvoices/april-2021/nrha-outlines-new-rural-emergency-hospital-model>

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The United States was founded on the idea that individuals have a say in their government and that public officials remain accountable to the people – not the other way around. An individual's decision to become vaccinated is not within the federal government's purview.

Given the fact that this mandate will impact 10.4 million healthcare workers at 76,000 medical facilities across the nation, we urge an immediate House consideration of H.J. Res 67 introduced by Representative Jeff Duncan so that the American people have a voice in this matter.

We appreciate your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Fred Keller
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



August Pfluger
Member of Congress



Tom McClintock
Member of Congress



Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress



Brian Mast
Member of Congress



Bill Posey
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Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress

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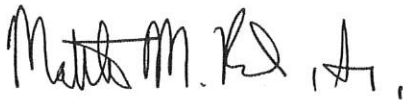
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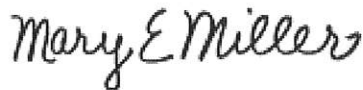
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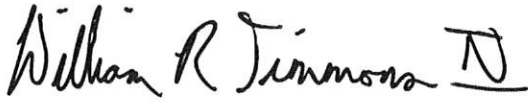


Tim Burchett
Member of Congress

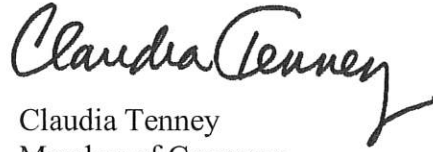


Randy K. Weber
Member of Congress

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William Timmons
Member of Congress



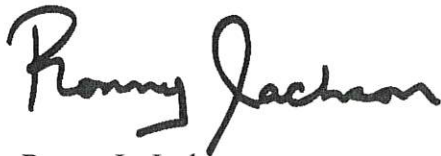
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Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
Member of Congress



Ron Estes
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Steny Hoyer, House Majority Leader
cc: The Honorable James Clyburn, House Majority Whip