Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of Allergy & Asthma Network, I write during the Network’s virtual advocacy day as your constituent to request your support for critical legislative and regulatory issues facing the more than 50 million Americans with allergies and 24 million with asthma including 6 million children under 18 years of age. Key recommendations include:

I. **ACCESS TO CARE**
   - Maintain adequate coverage for individuals who rely on Medicare and Medicaid and those with pre-existing conditions.
   - Ensure access to innovative therapies and technologies.
   - Support the implementation of school-based health management programs.
   - Increase transparency and provide a clear appeals process for medications subject to step therapy.

II. **AFFORDABLE MEDICATIONS AND TREATMENTS**
   - Reduce prescription drug costs for patients, particularly those with chronic or life-threatening conditions.
   - Reduce out-of-pocket costs for low-income seniors who rely on Medicare.
   - Improve access to generics and biosimilars in Part D of the Medicare program.
   - Provide a separate HCPCS billing code and reimbursement in Medicare Part B for each biosimilar biologic product.

III. **ASTHMA AND ALLERGY FEDERAL FUNDING**
Continue federal funding in fiscal year (FY) 2020 for asthma and allergy research, education and outreach initiatives at the U.S. Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Programs include CDC’s National Asthma Control Program, NIH’s National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute’s (NHLBI) National Asthma Education and Prevention Program, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) programs, DOD Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP) for food allergy, HUD Healthy Homes Program, and EPA’s asthma research, education and outreach initiatives.

IV. **HEALTH EQUITY**
Development of health equity interventions to support better health outcomes for patients in areas including, the environment (indoor and outdoor), transportation, education, and language and culture.

V. **FOOD PACKAGE LABELING**
The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) should require clear and consistent labeling of sesame in foods and any potential for cross contact during food processing.

VI. **AIRLINE PASSENGER SAFETY**
All airlines should carry no fewer than two packs of epinephrine auto-injectors as treatment for anaphylaxis and provide crewmember training to recognize the symptoms of an acute allergic reaction and administer an epinephrine auto-injector to support those living with severe allergies and/or asthma. Furthermore, all airlines need to enforce greater restrictions on animals aboard passenger flights, including the number of animals on board each flight, and types of service animals and emotional-support animals permitted.

VII. **CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PREVENTION AND SAFETY**
Continue federal funding to support critical healthcare needs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including medical equipment for health professionals and access to medications and treatments for people with chronic, underlying health conditions (e.g., asthma, COPD and other chronic respiratory diseases) who are at greater risk for complications if they are diagnosed. Additionally, widespread testing and reporting systems are needed to understand the impact on minority communities and vulnerable populations to determine steps to reach equitable health outcomes.
Your support is also requested for the following bills pending in Congress:

- **School-Based Allergies and Asthma Management Program Act (H.R. 2468):** Increases grant preference to states which implement comprehensive school-based asthma and allergy management programs that include student action plans, and education and training for school staff to administer medications in an emergency.

- **Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education and Research (FASTER) Act (H.R. 2117):** Requires that sesame be added to the list of eight allergens for which labeling is currently required. The bill would also provide the CDC with funding to conduct data on allergy prevalence.

- **Safe Step Act (H.R. 2279/S. 2546):** Requires a group health plan (or health insurance coverage offered in connection with such a plan) to provide an exceptions process for any medication subject to step therapy protocol.

- **Creating Opportunities Now for Necessary and Effective Care Technologies (CONNECT) for Health Act (H.R. 4932/S. 2741):** Increases Access to Respiratory Therapists as Telehealth Practitioners under the Medicare program

- **Climate Change Health Protection and Promotion Act of 2019 (H.R. 1243/S. 523):** Directs HHS to develop a national strategic action plan and program to assist health professionals and systems in preparing for and responding to the public health effects of climate change, and for other purposes.

- **Nurses for Under-Resourced Schools Everywhere (NURSE) Act (S.1362/H.R.2606):** Makes demonstration grants to eligible local educational agencies to increase the numbers of school nurses in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

- **Asthma Care and Prevention in Rural Communities Act (H.R. 4548):** Instructs CDC to provide grants for mobile clinics and telemedicine to treat asthma in children living in rural areas and medically underserved communities. Also directs CDC to conduct a study on the burden of asthma in these communities and report back to Congress.

- **Elijah Cummings Family Asthma Act (H.R. 5230):** Expands federal, state and local efforts to improve care for individuals with asthma.

- **Protecting American Lungs and Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2020 (H.R. 2339):** Prohibits tobacco companies from advertising their products to individuals under age 21 and implement strong restrictions on the marketing of e-cigarettes. Pulls all flavored tobacco products, including menthol, from the market and requires e-cigarette companies to pull all flavored products without pre-market authorization from the FDA.

Thank you for your support to help protect and improve the health of people living with asthma, allergies and related conditions. For more information, please contact Allergy & Asthma Network at 703-641-9595 or visit [AllergyAsthmaNetwork.org/advocacy](http://AllergyAsthmaNetwork.org/advocacy).