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The NRLN advocates the rights of more than 2 million American retirees from...

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July 7, 2020

The Honorable Greg Walden, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-3702

Dear Representative Walden:

On behalf of the more than 2 million retirees and future retirees represented by the National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN), I am requesting that you urge the Committee on Energy and Commerce's Subcommittee on Health to approve **H.R.5076, Protecting Seniors Through Immunization Act of 2019**. The Subcommittee on Health has had **H.R. 5076** since November 13, 2019.

Passage of **H.R. 5076** would reduce financial barriers by providing Medicare coverage of adult vaccines recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices with no additional cost-sharing for beneficiaries. This would apply immediately to shingles, tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap). Medicare coverage also would apply to new vaccines as they are approved, like the anticipated vaccines against respiratory syncytial virus and clostridium difficile. It should also apply when a vaccine is approved to prevent COVID-19.

Immunization coverage varies by vaccine under Medicare. Some immunizations – such as the flu, hepatitis B, and pneumococcal vaccines – are covered under Medicare Part B and available without additional out-of-pocket spending. Vaccines covered under Medicare Part D, including the shingles and Tdap vaccines, often require significant beneficiary cost-sharing. Too many seniors on Medicare weigh the health benefits of getting immunized against the out-of-pocket cost of immunizations.

H.R. 5076 would improve the education of Medicare beneficiaries by including information about coverage of vaccines in the Medicare & You Handbook and require a study on the level of immunizations among Medicare beneficiaries.

To learn more about why the NRLN supports passage of **H.R. 5076**, please ask a member of your staff to contact me or Alyson Parker, the NRLN's Executive Director in Washington, DC at 813-545-6792 or executivedirector@nrln.org. Please let me know whether you will support the passage of **H.R. 5076**.

Sincerely,

Bill Kadereit, President,
National Retiree Legislative Network
Phone: 972-722-5928 Email: president@nrln.org