

# NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

*The National Connection for Local Public Health*

January 26, 2016

The Honorable Orrin Hatch  
Chairman  
Senate Finance Committee  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Ranking Member  
Senate Finance Committee  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Johnny Isakson  
Co-Chair  
Chronic Care Working Group  
Senate Finance Committee  
131 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner  
Co-Chair  
Chronic Care Working Group  
Senate Finance Committee  
475 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Hatch and Senators Wyden, Isakson and Warner:

Thank you for your commitment to addressing the needs of Americans with chronic diseases and the opportunity to comment on the Bipartisan Chronic Care Working Group Policy Options Document.

On behalf of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and 2,800 local health departments that work every day to protect the health and safety of the public, I applaud your efforts to improve health care for Americans who suffer from chronic diseases. As the Bipartisan Chronic Care Working Group continues its work, NACCHO encourages your support for policy avenues that help prevent increasing numbers of Americans from developing chronic diseases in the first place. As you know, prevention of disease saves money in health care costs and improves productivity and quality of life so that people can achieve their full potential. Local health departments work with a wide range of community partners to create conditions and policies that help people make healthy choices, such as avoiding tobacco use, becoming more physically active, and eating healthier foods. All these proactive, non-clinical, measures contribute to the prevention of chronic diseases and conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

In addition, I urge your support for efforts to link disease prevention efforts with the health care system such as the Accountable Health Communities (AHC) model recently announced by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The AHC model addresses a critical gap between clinical care and community services in the current health care delivery system by testing whether systematically identifying and addressing the health-related social needs of beneficiaries impacts total health care costs and improves health and quality of care.

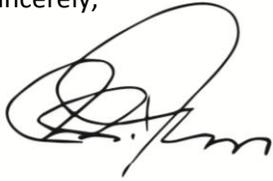
As the Bipartisan Chronic Care Working Group works to find solutions to improve health outcomes for Medicare beneficiaries, NACCHO also urges that you consider a focused approach to adult immunizations as a means of improving the health of patients with chronic conditions. Reducing barriers and increasing access and utilization of immunizations by Medicare beneficiaries will reduce



unnecessary deaths and expensive hospital stays. A concerted approach should include: the establishment and strengthening of additional federal benchmarks and measures to encourage tracking and reporting to achieve increased adult immunization rates; enhancing opportunities for provider assessment and patient and caregiver education and counseling on recommended immunization services; removing provider disincentives to assess, educate and administer recommended vaccines under capitated payment models; and improving adult immunization rates among at-risk populations. Addressing low immunization rates, especially among adults, would have a significant impact on the chronic disease burden in the United States.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. If you need additional information or have questions, please contact Eli Briggs, Senior Government Affairs Director at [ebriggs@naccho.org](mailto:ebriggs@naccho.org) or 202/507-4194.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Hasbrouck', with a large, stylized flourish at the top.

LaMar Hasbrouck, MD, MPH  
Executive Director