

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 26, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As you begin consideration of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations bill, we respectfully request the subcommittee continue its bipartisan commitment to the millions of Americans living with kidney diseases who are at the highest risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 and provide \$25 million in matching funds for KidneyX to build upon the success of prior KidneyX prize competitions and develop the world's first artificial kidney.

More than 37 million Americans are living with kidney diseases, which for nearly 800,000 Americans has already progressed to kidney failure, a life-threatening condition for which there is no cure. This under-recognized epidemic disproportionately affects communities of color. For instance, Black Americans comprise 13 percent of the U.S. population but represent 33 percent of Americans living on dialysis, the most common therapy for kidney failure.

The COVID-19 pandemic is especially deadly for kidney patients. Americans with kidney diseases are the most at risk among Medicare beneficiaries for severe outcomes from COVID-19 – including hospitalization and death, and COVID-19 damages the kidneys of as many as 50% of all hospitalized COVID-19 patients, even those without a prior history of kidney diseases.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Medicare dedicated \$81 billion, or 25 percent of all traditional Medicare fee-for-service spending, to the care of all kidney diseases, including \$50 billion, or 7 percent of Medicare fee-for-service spending, to manage kidney failure alone. Relative to other chronic diseases with comparable federal spending and disease burden, people with kidney diseases have had a lack of innovation in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of kidney diseases, but hope is on the horizon: KidneyX is attracting a new generation of innovators and investors and transforming kidney care.

KidneyX is a public-private partnership between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) to accelerate innovation in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of kidney diseases. A bipartisan achievement, KidneyX was first unveiled as a concept at the 2016 Obama White House Organ Summit and was a central pillar of President Donald J. Trump's July 2019 Executive Order on Advancing American Kidney Health.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

KidneyX is incentivizing innovators to fill unmet patient needs through a series of prize competitions, de-risking the commercialization process by fostering coordination among federal agencies and creating a sense of urgency on behalf of patients and families. To date, KidneyX has provided funding to nearly 50 innovators across 3 prize competitions for solutions ranging from implantable dialysis devices to new technologies that can exponentially decrease infections during dialysis. In 2020, KidneyX launched the COVID-19 Kidney Care Challenge to identify solutions that will reduce the risk of COVID-19 to kidney patients of the Artificial Kidney Prize to accelerate the development of a wearable or implanted artificial kidney.

The private sector has already committed \$25 million to KidneyX and is committed to matching any federal funding, Congress has demonstrated its commitment to KidneyX by appropriating \$10 million for the program since FY 20. Congress must increase its investment in FY 22 to continue the development of an artificial kidney and other innovations and catalyze further private investment in an underserved population.

We respectfully request that the LHHS Subcommittee continue the commitment made to millions of Americans living with kidney diseases by appropriating \$25 million in FY 2022 for KidneyX.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,



Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



Larry Bucshon, M.D.
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Brian Babin, D.D.S.
Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

/s/

Mike Kelly	Angie Craig	Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
G. K. Butterfield	Tony Cárdenas	A. Donald McEachin
Sharice L. Davids	Ron Kind	Elaine G. Luria
Julia Brownley	Bill Foster	Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Lisa Blunt Rochester	John Yarmuth	Darin LaHood
Sheila Jackson lee	Abigail D. Spanberger	Pramila Jayapal
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.	Robert C. "Bobby" Scott	Marc Veasey
Lucy McBath	Adam Smith	Nikema Williams
Thomas R. Suozzi	Joe Wilson	
Scott Peters	Jake Auchincloss	
Donald M. Payne, Jr.	Ilhan Omar	
Danny K. Davis	Jim Himes	
Anna G. Eshoo	Eleanor Holmes Norton	
John B. Larson	Marilyn Strickland	
Alcee L. Hastings	Stephen F. Lynch	
Earl Blumenauer	Zoe Lofgren	
Bobby L. Rush	Elissa Slotkin	
David Scott	Tom Malinowski	
Cindy Axne	Nydia M. Velázquez	
Jamie Raskin	Earl L. "Buddy" Carter	
Peter A. DeFazio	Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.	
Kim Schrier, M.D.	Mary Gay Scanlon	
Lizzie Fletcher	Bill Posey	
	Donald Norcross	