

April 9, 2020

The Honorable Marco Rubio
United States Senate
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ben Cardin
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nydia Velazquez
United States House of Representatives
2302 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Chabot
United States House of Representatives
2408 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

AOA Recommendations re: Support for 501(c)(6)'s Non-Profits Relief in Future COVID-19 Legislation

Dear Senator Rubio, Senator Cardin, Representative Velazquez, and Representative Chabot:

On behalf of the undersigned osteopathic specialty and state organizations, and the more than 151,000 osteopathic physicians and medical students we represent, thank you for the steps you have already taken to protect Americans during the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In particular, we would like to thank you for taking such strong steps to provide financial stability for non-profit 501(c)(3) groups, which was included in the 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).

Our organizations work to support osteopathic physicians (DOs) who treat patients not only at the frontlines of this pandemic, but throughout the year. We provide support for our physicians in a number of ways that are vital to their ability to care for their patients, such as addressing physician burnout, balancing family life, furthering their medical training, and disseminating up-to-date best care practices during this critical time. As you consider the next legislative package or supplemental appropriations measures to address new and continuing economic and medical concerns related to COVID-19, we write to request that any legislation passed into law include financial relief and stability for 501(c)(6) tax-exempt medical and trade associations who have been adversely impacted by this pandemic. At a time when physicians and other healthcare professionals are caring for patients on the frontlines of this pandemic, 501(c)(6) non-profit medical organizations are supporting and providing educational resources so that the healthcare community has the tools needed to administer the highest quality care during this unprecedented time, and for the future.

501(c)(6) associations play a critical role in generating revenue for many non-profit organizations, allowing them to better serve their mission. Many have been adversely impacted by COVID-19 just like small businesses and 501(c)(3) nonprofit associations. However, without federal financial intervention, many 501(c)(6)s may be forced to cut staff or scale back on services. Uncertainty with regard to the future can include, but are not limited to, hosting major meetings, events and conventions, coordination and development scientific and clinical education resources and providing Continuing Medical Education (CME).

CME, in particular, is a critical component of the benefits provided by many 501(c)(6)s; it ensures that physicians and other medical professionals are providing high-quality evidence-based care throughout their careers, and is required for maintaining state medical licenses. Unfortunately, while we are continuing our efforts to support physicians across our states and medical specialties, we are also navigating the impact of canceled meetings, conventions, and educational conferences. This has led to the cancellation of numerous contracts, incurring potential financial penalties and revenue losses. All the while, we are continuing our efforts to support the healthcare community during this critical time.

As discussions are taking place regarding what to include in the future COVID-19 legislation, we respectfully ask for relief for the 501(c)(6) medical community, so we can continue to serve as a trusted resource for physicians, patients and policymakers alike during this pandemic and beyond.

If you have questions regarding the recommendations outlined above, or if the AOA can be a resource in any way, please contact David Pugach, JD, AOA Senior Vice President of Public Policy, at DPugach@osteopathic.org or (202) 349-8753.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

American Osteopathic Association

American Academy of Osteopathy

American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians

American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians

American College of Osteopathic Neurologists and Psychiatrists

American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians

American College of Osteopathic Surgeons

American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine

American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics

American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine

American Osteopathic Association of Prolotherapy Regenerative Medicine

American Osteopathic College of Dermatology

American Osteopathic College of Proctology

American Osteopathic College of Radiology
American Osteopathic Information Association
American Osteopathic Society of Rheumatic Diseases
Association of Military Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons
Florida Osteopathic Medical Association
Idaho Osteopathic Physicians Association
Kansas Association of Osteopathic Medicine
Kentucky Osteopathic Medical Association
Louisiana Osteopathic Medical Association
Maine Osteopathic Association
Michigan Osteopathic Association
Minnesota Osteopathic Medical Society
Mississippi Osteopathic Medical Association
Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons
Montana Osteopathic Medical Association
New Jersey Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons
New York State Osteopathic Medical Society
North Carolina Osteopathic Medical Association
Ohio Osteopathic Association
Oklahoma Osteopathic Association
Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons of Oregon
Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association
Tennessee Osteopathic Medical Association
Texas Osteopathic Medical Association
Utah Osteopathic Medical Association
Virginia Osteopathic Medical Association
Washington State Osteopathic Medical Association