

April 6, 2020

The Honorable Bob Casey
U.S. Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Casey:

On behalf of the more than 54 million Americans with doctor-diagnosed arthritis in the United States, the Arthritis Foundation writes in support of the Coronavirus Relief for Seniors and People with Disabilities Act (S. 3544), which would help to address the health, well-being, and economic needs for people with disabilities, older adults, and their caregivers.

Arthritis is the number one cause of disability in the United States. According to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, over 23 million adults report activity limitations due to their arthritis. By 2040, it is estimated this number will rise to approximately 35 million. There are many common activities that people with arthritis report are difficult to complete every day including grasping small objects, sitting or standing for more than 2 hours, or climbing a flight of stairs without resting. People with arthritis are also more likely to have at least one chronic condition such as heart disease (49 percent), diabetes (47 percent), or obesity (31 percent), firmly placing people with chronic diseases at higher risk for infection from coronavirus (COVID-19).

During the fight against COVID-19, it is critical we ensure people with arthritis are supported with additional resources and supports. The Coronavirus Relief for Seniors and People with Disabilities Act would cover the cost of treatment for low-income seniors, promote home and community-based services, and importantly, assure older Americans and people with disabilities have access to healthy food in the safety of their home.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. We look forward to working with you to improve care and outcomes for people with arthritis and other chronic diseases. Please contact Vincent Pacileo, Director of Federal Affairs, at vpacileo@arthritis.org, if we can be of any assistance moving forward.

Sincerely,



Anna Hyde
Vice President, Advocacy and Access
Arthritis Foundation