

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 15, 2019

Dear Colleague,

We are writing to ask you to consider joining us as a co-sponsor on H.R. 2501, the Medical Nutrition Equity Act. This legislation addresses key issues faced by patients with certain inherited metabolic disorders and gastrointestinal conditions who depend on specialized medically necessary nutrition to treat their disease. Most of these conditions are considered rare.

Some patients with these conditions have experienced the awful moment when they have been told that they or their child has a disease that prohibits their body from digesting or metabolizing regular food. For example, a person with PKU — a metabolic disorder—must manage macronutrients closely and typically the amount of protein they consume per day cannot exceed the amount in one egg. While PKU patients can supplement with fruits and vegetables which are low in protein, they can't meet their caloric needs through these foods alone. Most manage these complex nutritional needs by consuming specialized formulas because failure to maintain the required diet puts them at risk for brain damage, repeated hospitalizations, failure to grow, or even death.

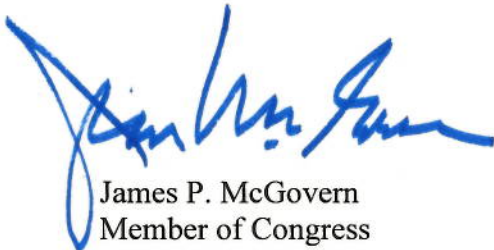
The key with these patients is that unlike other conditions like diabetes or celiac disease, their condition cannot be managed by just avoiding certain foods. Specialized medically necessary nutrition prescribed by a health care provider is standard-of-care treatment for these patients and is essential to healthy development.

The Medical Nutrition Equity Act would require coverage for these highly specialized formulas and foods. The legislation is narrowly drafted to focus on individuals for whom medically necessary nutrition is the treatment for their diseases.

There is precedent for this legislation—in December 2016, Congress passed legislation that improved coverage for medical nutrition for military families enrolled in TRICARE. Our bill expands coverage to include patients covered under Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Medicare, the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program, and private insurance.

If you have questions or wish to co-sponsor the legislation, please contact Drea Shropshire in Rep. McGovern's office at Saundra.Shropshire@mail.house.gov or Jordan Evich in Rep. Herrera Beutler's office at Jordan.Evich@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Jaime Herrera Beutler

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