

Sent: Friday, September 19, 2025

Sending Office: Honorable James P. McGovern

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## **Become an Original Cosponsor of the Medical Foods and Formulas Act of 2025**

Dear Colleague,

We invite you to join the *Medical Foods and Formulas Access Act of 2025* as an original cosponsor. **This legislation is a reintroduction of what was formerly known as the *Medical Nutrition Equity Act* (H.R.6892 in the 118th Congress). The deadline for original cosponsors is Monday, September 29th.**

The *Medical Foods and Formulas Access Act* would require coverage for specialized formulas and foods for patients with inherited metabolic disorders and specific digestive diseases and disorders that prevent their bodies from absorbing, digesting or metabolizing food. The legislation is narrowly drafted to focus on individuals for whom specialized formulas and foods are used for the treatment or management of their diseases.

Our bill covers medical foods and formulas for individuals enrolled in Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Medicare, and the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program. There is clear precedent for this legislation: in December 2016, Congress passed as part of the *National Defense Authorization Act* improved coverage for medical nutrition for military families enrolled in TRICARE.

Many states require some level of coverage of medically necessary nutrition, but coverage is highly variable and leaves families at risk. When an insurance company does cover a medically necessary formula, many times it is accompanied by the stipulation that the formula be administered through a surgically placed tube, introducing additional cost and risk. These types of coverage policies are not rational, are not cost-effective, and interfere with medical decision making. We need legislation to improve access to medically necessary formulas and foods for patients with digestive and metabolic disorders who rely on them to treat or manage their condition.

### ***Medical Foods and Formulas are Essential for Patients with PKU***

Approximately 2,000 infants every year are diagnosed with an inherited metabolic disorder because all states have mandated testing for these disorders. One such metabolic disorder is Phenylketonuria (PKU) which requires vigilant management of daily macronutrients. Typically, the amount of protein a person with PKU can 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 foods and formulas. Failure to maintain the required diet puts them at risk for brain damage, repeated hospitalizations, failure to grow, and even death. In other words, their condition cannot be managed by just avoiding certain foods. Specialized medically necessary nutrition prescribed by a health care provider has been standard-of-care treatment for these patients since the 1960s and is essential to healthy development.

### ***Patients with Crohn's Disease Benefit from Specialized Formula***

A common digestive disease that may require the use of specialized formulas is Crohn's disease, which is a lifelong illness that causes intestinal inflammation, leading to abdominal pain, diarrhea, anemia, and poor growth in children. The incidence of Crohn's disease is rising in the United States and there is no cure. There are many different medications, including biologics, for the treatment of Crohn's disease, but those medications suppress the immune system and increase the patient's risk of infection, along with other side effects. That is a big consideration for pediatric patients who will have many decades of treatment ahead of them. Luckily, biologics are not the only option. Studies in children have demonstrated that formulas can be as effective as conventional and biologic medication options in achieving remission in Crohn's disease.

The legislation is supported by more than 50 organizations. Please visit [nutritionequity.org](https://nutritionequity.org) to learn more.

If you have questions or wish to co-sponsor the legislation, please contact Bella Edo in Rep. McGovern's office at [Isabella.Edo@mail.house.gov](mailto:Isabella.Edo@mail.house.gov) or Kevin Alkinburg in Rep. Rutherford's office at [Kevin.Alkinburg@mail.house.gov](mailto:Kevin.Alkinburg@mail.house.gov).