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KIDNEY PATIENTS DEMAND CONGRESS PASS BIPARTISAN CORONAVIRUS BILL ASAP!

Washington, D.C. - The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP) deployed a sophisticated, virtual campaign today aimed at pushing the U.S. Congress to act immediately on pending Coronavirus emergency response legislation to protect the health of all citizens; provide urgent assistance to workers and employers; and to inject a strategic stimulus into the national economy. Since 1969, AAKP has served as the independent voice of kidney patients; families; and those professionals who help kidney patients manage chronic kidney disease (CKD), dialysis and kidney transplants through immunosuppression therapy. Over 33% of Americans, 80 million people, are at-risk of kidney disease. Over 37 million have already been impacted by the disease.

Richard Knight, AAKP President and a 14-year kidney transplant recipient stated, "As citizens, kidney patients are sending a clear, bipartisan message to the U.S. Congress that every American, especially those with underlying health conditions, expects Congress to address this national emergency immediately and with consensus. Coronavirus has changed the everyday behavior of all Americans and we expect Congress to take heed, change their own behavior, drop partisan bickering, and produce a result for the American people." Knight is a small business consultant; former Congressional staffer and liaison to the Congressional Black Caucus; and is involved in numerous precision medicine and medical innovation efforts involving the Federal government, the private sector, and broad-based national coalitions serving high-risk patients of all disease types.

Anyone interested in sending their own message to the Congress to act on the Coronavirus and in support of kidney patients and others considered at a high-risk for contracting the virus can go to the [AAKP Action Center \(click here\)](#).

Paul T. Conway, AAKP Chair of Policy and Global Affairs, a 23-year kidney transplant recipient stated, "The Coronavirus pandemic has caused unprecedented health and economic instability in the lives of every American, especially among patients and families who bravely manage the complexities of chronic diseases on a daily basis. Congressional inaction and partisan in-fighting during a national emergency is never acceptable. AAKP will utilize every virtual and social media technology at our disposal to respectfully prompt Congress to act with a sense of urgency to further defend public health; American workers and their employers; and our national economy." Conway is a former Chief of Staff of the United States Department of Labor and a former agency Chief of Staff at the Department of Homeland Security. He serves as the AAKP liaison to the Federal Health Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee, (HICPAC), a Federal Advisory Committee appointed to provide advice and guidance to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) regarding the practice of infection control and strategies for surveillance, prevention, and control of healthcare-associated infections, antimicrobial resistance, and related events in healthcare settings.

AAKP virtual platforms and social networks are nationally and internationally known for their reach and impact. In 2019, AAKP, in collaboration with the *George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences*,

utilized its virtual capacities to livestream the *Inaugural Global Summit on Kidney Disease Innovations*, engaging over 10,000 kidney patients, health system administrators, and medical experts in over 50 countries. Since 2018, AAKP has conducted the largest virtual kidney voter registration drive in the nation, the [“I am a Kidney Voter” campaign](#), which has registered kidney health consumers in every state.

AAKP has organized [The Decade of the Kidney™](#) to mark the beginning of an era that will be remembered for patient consumer choice; kidney precision medicine; greater access to kidney transplantation and less organ discards; the first artificial implantable kidney; and a departure from the default status quo, burdensome and highly antiquated in-center kidney dialysis care. AAKP marks the start of the decade with President Trump’s July 2019 signing of the bipartisan Executive Order on *Advancing American Kidney Health*, a kidney policy achievement whose underlying principles of true consumer choice and free market health care are foundational principles to AAKP.

For more information about AAKP’s educational and advocacy programs, visit www.aakp.org and www.aakp.org/center-for-patient-engagement-and-advocacy/action-center/. Follow AAKP on social media via Facebook: @kidneypatient; Twitter and Instagram: @kidneypatients.

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