April 13, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

As you negotiate further legislation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we renew our calls to include measures to support our service members, their families, and military retirees. By temporarily eliminating the copay for mail order prescriptions through TRICARE, beneficiaries can continue to access their prescription medications at no cost out of pocket while practicing social distancing and protecting mission critical personnel.

Section 702 of the Fiscal Year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act adjusted pharmacy copayments for 2018 through 2027, when the Secretary of Defense will be authorized to set and adjust cost-sharing amounts. For 2020, the copay is $10 for a 90-day supply of a generic drug and $29 for a 90-day supply of a brand name drug. However, if a beneficiary picks up their prescription drugs from a Military Treatment Facility (MTF), they do not need to pay anything out of pocket.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends staying home and practicing social distancing, TRICARE should similarly incentivize people to follow these guidelines. An easy way to keep people in their homes is to temporarily eliminate the copay for mail order drugs, making the cost the same no matter how the beneficiary receives their medication. Service members, retirees, and their families would no longer need to choose between staying safe and accessing prescription drugs without a copay.

In addition to helping service members, retirees, and their families make safe choices in accordance with CDC guidelines, this decision would help beneficiaries who are no longer able to access a MTF. Some installation commanders have suspended or limited installation access for retirees and survivors to protect mission critical personnel from infection. Many of these beneficiaries can no longer access the MTF pharmacies and will have to transfer their prescriptions to mail order of retail pharmacies. These impacted families should not be burdened with unexpected costs related to mail order pharmacy copays.

In any upcoming coronavirus relief package, I urge you to consider this change to help TRICARE beneficiaries access their medications without incurring extra cost or endangering
their health. I appreciate your attention to this matter. Thank you for your service and leadership during this national crisis.

Sincerely,

Elaine G. Luria  
Member of Congress

Andy Kim  
Member of Congress

/s/ Cindy Axne  
Member of Congress

/s/ Ed Case  
Member of Congress

/s/ Donald S. Beyer, Jr.  
Member of Congress

/s/ David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress

/s/ Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress

/s/ Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress

/s/ Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress

/s/ Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

/s/ Anthony G. Brown  
Member of Congress

/s/ Tom Cole  
Member of Congress

/s/ Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress

/s/ Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress

/s/ Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress

/s/ Joe Cunningham  
Member of Congress

/s/ André Carson  
Member of Congress

/s/ Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress
Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress

Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

Deb Haaland
Member of Congress

Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

Denny Heck
Member of Congress

Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

Anne McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

Conor Lamb
Member of Congress

Mike Levin
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton
Member of Congress

Gregory F. Murphy, MD
Member of Congress

Joe Neguse
Member of Congress

Donald Norcross
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

Chris Pappas
Member of Congress
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

David Scott
Member of Congress

Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Abigail D. Spanberger
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson
Member of Congress

David Trone
Member of Congress

Michael Waltz
Member of Congress

Steve Womack
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth
Member of Congress