



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

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ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

March 9, 2022

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anna Eshoo, Chair  
Health Subcommittee  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brett Guthrie, Ranking Member  
Health Subcommittee  
Committee on Energy and Commerce,  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers, Chairman Eshoo, and Ranking Member Guthrie,

On behalf of the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), I write today to encourage you to advance, this year, the bipartisan Cures 2.0 Act (H.R. 6000), championed by Representatives Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Fred Upton (R-MI). We have heard the Energy and Commerce Committee intends to hold a hearing on this legislation, and the AAOS applauds your stewardship of this impactful bill that would increase patient access, critical health care services, and disperse crucial resource funding.

We were thrilled to see that Cures 2.0 continues to build on the forward-looking framework of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act by focusing on encouraging the optimization of medical device approval, reducing barriers to interoperability, and mitigating physician burden by clarifying or eliminating outdated regulations. We believe these efforts, if implemented, will improve quality, safety, and efficiency of healthcare delivery and provide further opportunities for patients to become active participants in their own care.

The AAOS has been active in advocating for two specific pieces of legislation included within Cures 2.0; H.R. 1332, the Telehealth Modernization Act, and H.R. 869, the Research Investment to Spark the Economy (RISE) Act. AAOS believes many of the temporary telehealth waivers granted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) during the Public Health Emergency (PHE) should be permanently codified into law including payment-parity between in-person and telehealth visits, the removal of any location or geographic-site restrictions, the

allowance of audio-only visits within Medicare, and the 60% increase in the number of telehealth services covered by Medicare. Continued access to telehealth services is a critical component for orthopaedic patients, many of whom face mobility issues that make it difficult to see their doctor in person for diagnoses that can be easily delivered via telehealth.

We support the RISE Act, which would reinvigorate crucial federal research projects and pursuits which have been limited by the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE). The AAOS is particularly supportive of the \$10 billion that would be directed to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which houses the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), and the \$3 billion that would be directed to the Department of Defense (DOD), which houses the Peer-Reviewed Orthopaedic Research Program (PRORP)- a competitive grant program that funds research pertaining to extremity war injuries.

AAOS is also especially supportive of provisions within Cures 2.0 aimed at increasing the diversity of participants in clinical trials, promoting the use of evidence-based guidelines, and establishing the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health. As you consider your committee's upcoming priorities, we respectfully request that you convene a hearing and mark-up on Cures 2.0 and consider including this bipartisan bill in any moving legislative package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel K. Guy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Daniel K. Guy, MD, FAAOS  
President, American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons

cc: Felix H. Savoie, III, MD, FAAOS, AAOS First Vice-President  
Kevin J. Bozic, MD, MBA, FAAOS, AAOS Second Vice-President  
Thomas E. Arend, Jr., Esq., CAE, AAOS Chief Executive Officer  
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