



October 7, 2020

The Honorable David Loeb sack
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Loeb sack:

The American Kidney Fund is writing in support of H.R. 3235, the “Access to Genetic Counselor Services Act of 2019.” The Medicare program should recognize genetic counselors as practitioners, which would give beneficiaries greater access to their services.

AKF fights kidney disease on all fronts as the nation’s leading kidney nonprofit. We work on behalf of the 37 million Americans living with kidney disease, and the millions more at risk, with an unmatched scope of programs that support people wherever they are in their fight against kidney disease—from prevention through transplant. With programs that address early detection, disease management, financial assistance, clinical research, innovation and advocacy, no kidney organization impacts more lives than AKF.

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide and a significant number of cases are from an unknown cause. AKF is working to help identify why so many patients get CKD and genetic counseling has a powerful role to play in that endeavor. Genetic counselors are trained and certified to interpret complex genetic information and to share that information in an understandable way to patients.

Requiring Medicare to recognize genetic counselors as providers also has an impact on private insurance. Some insurers do not cover services from a provider not recognized by Medicare, which can lead to high out of pocket expenses for patients requiring the services of a genetic counselor. This can be very difficult especially at a time when families are facing complex medical decisions.



We look forward to working with you to ensure patients receive high quality genetic counseling services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "LaVarne A. Burton". The signature is written in a cursive style.

LaVarne A. Burton
President and CEO