



## Patient groups warn: Administration policy encourages discrimination in health care

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 15, 2020 – *Today 29 patient and consumer groups representing millions of people nationwide with pre-existing health conditions issued the following statement in response to administration’s final rule. The rule, finalized Friday, attempts to undermine Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act by removing explicit protections against discrimination of patients by providers and institutions:*

“By finalizing these changes, the Administration tries to unwind significant advances that have ensured vulnerable populations, including individuals with pre-existing conditions, are free from discrimination and able to access healthcare. The elimination of these important protections will result in severe consequences for the health and well-being of Americans seeking health care, especially those with serious, acute, chronic or other pre-existing conditions and those in vulnerable and under-served communities.

Many Americans and their dependents will now be less likely to access preventive, diagnostic, and critical health care, or to enforce their rights to obtain such care. This is especially detrimental to the

health and well-being of those living with pre-existing conditions, as well as women, LGBTQI+ individuals, people with disabilities, and those with limited English proficiency.

These communities have long faced discrimination, bias, stigma, substandard care, and the denial of care. We are disturbed that the Administration is trying to undermine the equitable application and enforcement of the law—and making it more likely that providers and institutions will discriminate against millions of Americans in need of health care.

Particularly as the world confronts a global pandemic, these actions have no place within our system of care and put the public's health at risk. Those that fear discrimination will be less likely to seek care and treatment for COVID-19. This puts the entire population at risk and undermines federal, state, and local efforts to control the virus. As a result, we express our continued opposition and deep concern over the changes finalized by the administration and urge immediate action to prevent this regulation from taking full effect.”

Alpha-1 Foundation  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American Kidney Fund  
American Lung Association  
Cancer Support Community  
CancerCare  
Chronic Disease Coalition  
COPD Foundation  
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation  
Epilepsy Foundation  
Family Voices  
Hemophilia Federation of America  
Immune Deficiency Foundation  
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
Mended Hearts & Mended Little Hearts  
Muscular Dystrophy Association  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Health Council  
National Hemophilia Foundation  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
National Organization for Rare Disorders  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
National Psoriasis Foundation  
Pulmonary Hypertension Association  
Susan G. Komen  
The AIDS Institute  
The American Liver Foundation  
United Way Worldwide  
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease