

– AOA LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY ACTION ALERT –

Tell Congress That Optometry Practices Need Immediate Crisis Relief

- ✓ Congress and the President are working on a national response to the Coronavirus / COVID-19 crisis, and the AOA is making sure that Optometry is heard loud and clear in Washington, D.C. as relief and recovery legislation is drafted.
- ✓ Last week, [the AOA reported on the successful inclusion of Doctors of Optometry as physicians in emergency legislation to expand Medicare telehealth services](#).
- ✓ Right now, Congress is considering another crisis relief bill. The AOA is making sure that U.S. Senators and House members fully understand frontline, essential care role and the extreme disruption and care delivery complications that practices across the country are facing each day during the crisis.
- ✓ The AOA's message is that Optometry practices must be fully included in all physician-level and small business crisis relief provisions now being readied to be voted on.
- ✓ Doctors, optometry students, and optometric staff are asked to contact their U.S. Senators (202-224-3121) to express support AOA's recommendations to recognize the challenges Doctors of Optometry are facing and to assure continued patient access to essential eye health care in communities across America.

Please Take Immediate Action

Suggested telephone message for AOA Doctors to use to call their two U.S. Senators (can be adapted for Optometry Students and Optometric Staff)

Step 1:

Call both of your U.S. Senators through the Capitol Hill switchboard at 202-224-3121, and deliver the message below. Please include relevant information about the challenges your office is facing under crisis conditions.

Step 2:

Thank you for taking my call. I appreciate your service to the public at this difficult time and all that the Senator is doing to support our state during this national emergency.

I am a Doctor of Optometry practicing in _____. I deliver essential, primary eye health and vision care to working men and women, school-aged children and seniors, and my practice employs _____.

There are enormous challenges and risks for all frontline doctors like me and other providers arising from the Covid-19 outbreak, but the care we're providing is essential to the health and well-being of our patients and our communities. I believe in the difference my colleagues and I are making and in the oath we took as doctors.

Please let the Senator know that I called to request that he/she work with the American Optometric Association in the days ahead. My request is that the Senator support the AOA's specific

recommendations to ensure that the essential care I am providing and the role my practice and my state association plays in our communities is fully recognized in crisis relief legislation now being considered.

I would welcome the chance to continue to be a resource for the senator on frontline essential care and how we can respond together to the current crisis. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any further information I can provide.

Step 3:

Update the AOA Advocacy Team in Washington, D.C. by sending an email to Matt Willette, AOA Director of Congressional Relations, at MWillette@aoa.org.