President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Vice President Kamala Harris
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris:

On behalf of the nation’s 37 million Americans living with kidney diseases and the tens of thousands of kidney health professionals who care for them, we, the undersigned organizations, stand ready to collaborate with you and your administration to advance polices that will benefit people with kidney diseases and their families.

Our organizations are dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by this costly and under-recognized public health epidemic—an epidemic marked by its disproportionate effect on communities of color and worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, Black Americans make up just 13 percent of the U.S. population, but approximately 33 percent of those on dialysis. People on dialysis who suffer from COVID-19 are hospitalized more frequently than any other group of Medicare beneficiaries, and in many previously healthy patients, the novel SARS-COV2 virus causes acute and sometimes lasting kidney impairment. The COVID-19 pandemic has made many of our organizations’ goals on behalf of people with kidney diseases all the more urgent to achieve and sustain.

As the country begins to build back better under your leadership, our organizations urge you to seize the moment on behalf of people with kidney diseases and those at risk for kidney diseases. We offer our collective expertise in support of this endeavor and emphasize our shared commitment to the following principles for new and evolving kidney health policy:

- Place the patient’s voice at the center of policymaking and increase patient engagement
- Ensure that new and revised kidney health policies increase health equity
- Prioritize prevention of kidney disease and kidney failure, particularly earlier screening and detection and patient access to therapies that slow progressive kidney failure, including nutritional care
- Support policies and programs to accelerate development of—and patient access to—new kidney diagnostics, therapeutics, and devices. Unlike people with other chronic diseases (such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes), people with kidney diseases have not benefitted from similar levels of innovation—from kidney disease prevention and diagnosis to kidney failure treatments, including transplant care
- Increase patient choice in kidney care options and environments, including telehealth, home dialysis, self-care dialysis, in-center dialysis, conservative care and, crucially, transplant
- Expand patient access to transplantation, the best therapy for most patients with kidney failure, by continued organ procurement organization reform, prioritizing transplantation in care models, revising transplant center metrics, decreasing organ waste, and emphasizing equity in transplant policymaking
- Dedicate funding to kidney research that is commensurate with the $130 billion annual Medicare kidney health expenditure, including patient-directed and investigator-initiated research as well as visionary programs such as the Kidney Precision Medicine Project
- Help the nation’s kidney health workforce reflect the diversity of people with kidney diseases, including by supporting a diverse trainee pipeline in the United States and
recognizing the value that international medical graduates—who constitute half of America’s kidney health professionals—bring to America’s people with kidney diseases

- Improve public awareness and understanding of kidney diseases and related risk factors, especially among high-risk populations
- Recognize, in all COVID-19-related decision-making, the unique risk people with kidney diseases face and prioritize the needs of this vulnerable patient population and their caregivers, such as early access to COVID-19 vaccines for dialysis patients and rapid post-market analysis to determine their safety in transplant recipients

Our organizations thank you for your focus on both COVID-19 and health equity, two paramount issues affecting Americans with kidney diseases and the health professionals who treat them. We offer our collective and individual expertise in service of tackling these challenges and improving the kidney health of all Americans in partnership with you and your administration.

Sincerely,

American Kidney Fund
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Society of Diagnostic and Interventional Nephrology
American Society of Nephrology
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology
AstraZeneca
Atlantic Dialysis
Baxter
IgA Nephropathy Foundation
Kidney Care Partners
National Kidney Foundation
NephCure Kidney International
Northwest Kidney Centers
Organize
Outset
Oxalosis & Hyperoxaluria Foundation
Rare Kidney Disease Foundation
Renal Healthcare Association
Renal Physicians Association
Renal Support Network
Rogosin
Veterans Transplantation Association

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CC: Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
    RADM Felicia Collins, MD, MPH
    Norris Cochran
    Robert Gordon
    David Kessler
    Vivek Murthy
    Marcella Nunez-Smith