



September 4, 2024

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Honorable Cathy McMorris Rogers
Chair, Energy and Commerce Cmte
House of Representatives
2188 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce Cmte
House of Representatives
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Brett Guthrie
Chair, Health Subcommittee
House of Representatives
2434 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Anna Eshoo
Ranking Member, Health Subcommittee
House of Representatives
271 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair McMorris Rodgers, Ranking Member Pallone, Chair Guthrie, and Ranking Member Eshoo:

The Global Liver Institute (GLI) and members of the Liver Action Network urge the Energy and Commerce Committee to advance the revised version of H.R. 4818, the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA), which was recently approved by the House Ways & Means Committee on June 27, 2024. We recognize that the revised version marks a significant step forward in expanding access to obesity care for Medicare beneficiaries. We support the efforts of the obesity community to work with the committee on legislation that will extend coverage as broadly as possible in the current Congress. We are reaching out to share the united support of the liver disease community for House passage of the revised version of the legislation.

This legislation is particularly vital when considering the strong connection between obesity and related health issues such as nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), also known as metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), and its advanced form, nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), also known as metabolic

dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis (MASH). With over 148 million people worldwide suffering from NASH/MASH, and the prevalence of obesity expected to rise, expanding access to effective treatments is crucial. Research has closely linked the presence of NASH/MASH to metabolic comorbidities such as obesity and diabetes. Without treatment, by 2035¹, it's projected that 1 in 4 individuals will be obese². Changing the trajectory of these numbers is essential and requires comprehensive and evidence-based approaches to address NASH/MASH and obesity disease care.

The revised bill includes a critical provision allowing Medicare Part D to cover FDA-approved obesity medications for older adults who have been continuously using these medications under their existing health plan for at least 12 months before becoming Medicare-eligible. This grandfathering mechanism would ensure continuity of care, preventing any disruption in treatment as these individuals transition to Medicare. The bill also requires the Department of Health and Human Services to review and update its national coverage determination for intensive behavioral therapy for obesity within a year of the bill's passage.

Advancing the bill into law will require strong bipartisan approval. As the liver disease community, we recognize that this expanded coverage maintaining access to essential obesity medications is going to also reduce the risk factors for developing NASH/MASH.

While we recognize the varying opinions in Congress regarding the scope and cost implications of this legislation, we join the obesity community in supporting House passage of the version passed by the Ways and Means Committee. Doing so is the most practical and effective path forward to maintain the momentum toward the bill being signed into law and closing the gaps in liver health.

Therefore, we urge the Energy and Commerce Committee to allow for the continued movement of this legislation forward and we stand ready to provide any support necessary to ensure the successful passage of legislation that increases access to obesity care.

Please reach out to Jeff McIntyre, GLI Vice President for Liver Health Programs, for additional information at jmcintyre@globalliver.org.

Sincerely,

Global Liver Institute
Liver Coalition of California
Liver Health Foundation
Mid South Liver Alliance
NASH KNOWledge
Texas Liver Foundation
TRIO-Oklahoma

¹ <https://www.worldobesityday.org/>

² <https://aasldpubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/hep.28431>

About Global Liver Institute

Global Liver Institute (GLI) was built to solve the problems that matter to liver patients, equipping advocates to improve the lives of individuals and families impacted by liver disease. GLI promotes innovation, encourages collaboration, and supports the scaling of optimal approaches to help eradicate liver diseases. GLI believes liver health must take its place on the global public health agenda commensurate with the prevalence and impact of liver illness. GLI is the only patient-created, patient-driven nonprofit organization tackling liver health and all liver disease holistically, operating globally. Follow GLI on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).



