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American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living: Statement regarding COVID relief package

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The American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL), representing more than 14,000 nursing homes and assisted living communities across the country that provide care to approximately five million people each year, released the following statement in response to the pending COVID relief package.

The following statement is attributable to Mark Parkinson, president and CEO of AHCA/NCAL:

“While we appreciate the difficulty in reaching a bipartisan compromise, we are disappointed that Congress could not strike a deal that recognizes the dire situation our long term care residents and staff are facing right now. Due to soaring community spread, nursing homes are experiencing a record-breaking number of cases and deaths—worse than the spring. Even with a vaccine on its way, it will likely take months to fully vaccinate our residents and staff, as well as the remaining public. Facilities will not be able to return to normal for some time, meaning providers need ongoing support with PPE, testing and staffing.

“Meanwhile, nearly two-thirds of long term care facilities are operating at a loss, and the additional funds slated for the Provider Relief Fund for all heath care providers in this legislation are minimal. Hundreds of facilities are in danger of closing their doors permanently and uprooting the frail seniors they care for. Congress must do more in the new year by directing specific aid to long term care.

We owe it to our nation's seniors and our health care heroes."