

United States Senate

May 11, 2020

Dear Colleague,

As Congress works to provide relief to Americans who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, we request your support for inclusion of the bipartisan bill, S.1443, the *Credit for Caring Act*, or, at a minimum, the inclusion of a modified version of S.1443 to help address the financial challenges of caregiving during this pandemic. Many caregivers are experiencing increased financial strain brought on by COVID-19, and yet they continue to provide essential care. Caregivers play a particularly critical role during this crisis by reducing the burden on hospitals, nursing homes, and other care facilities that are working to combat the spread of this virus and protect vulnerable populations.

While family caregiver shortages existed prior to the onset of COVID-19, this current crisis is only amplifying the critical work of caregivers who support the daily needs of those who may be at greater risk to this virus and who require greater support at home. This pandemic has led to family members taking on critical caregiver roles as they provide for their loved ones, while also managing financial strains and economic uncertainty.

An estimated 41 million family caregivers provide \$470 billion annually in unpaid care to their loved ones^{li}. This care helps delay and prevent more costly nursing home care and prevent unnecessary hospital stays. This is particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended that Americans stay at home as much as possible to protect themselves and others from contracting the virus. The care provided by family caregivers is even more important than usual to the health care system during this pandemic.

Unfortunately, caregivers are often forced to sacrifice their personal finances to ensure their family member receives appropriate care from home or other settings. In 2016, on average, family caregivers spent nearly 20% of their income on out-of-pocket expenses to support their loved one^{lii}. This has caused individuals to sacrifice financial savings, retirement, or even their own health care expenses. COVID-19 further exasperates this issue as individuals providing care face added financial stress due to the economic hardship brought on by this pandemic, such as unplanned expenses, furloughs, layoffs, or reduced work hours.

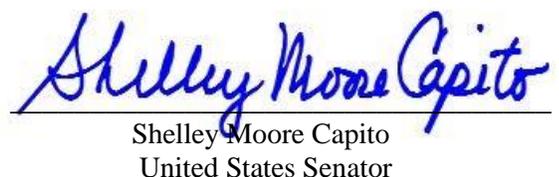
To recognize the critical nature and economic value of caregivers and give them some financial relief, Senators Ernst (R-IA), Bennet (D-CO), Capito (R-WV), and Baldwin (D-WI) introduced the Credit for Caring Act (S. 1443). This legislation would provide a non-refundable federal tax credit of up to \$3,000 to eligible family caregivers to help address the financial challenges of caregiving. Caregivers are facing unprecedented challenges and are in need of support in order to continue their critical contributions, which reduce the burden on our health care system and provides care and support for those who need it most.

We ask that you consider cosponsoring the *Credit for Caring Act* and requesting its inclusion in future COVID-19 legislative relief packages, or, at a minimum, the inclusion of a modified version of S.1443 to provide a federal tax credit for caregivers during this pandemic.

Sincerely,



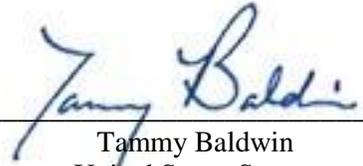
Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator