



**American College of  
Foot and Ankle Surgeons®**  
*Proven leaders. Lifelong learners. Changing lives.*

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April 24, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
U.S. Capitol Building, H-222  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
U.S. Capitol Building, S-230  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
U.S. Capitol Building, H-204  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate  
U.S. Capitol Building, S-221  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of our 7,700 members, the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons thank you for your leadership during the COVID-19 crisis. We commend you on passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and we look forward to seeing additional packages that would extend relief to doctors of podiatric medicine (DPM), also known as podiatric physicians and surgeons, or podiatrists as they navigate through this unrepresented time.

While we support the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services order for physicians to suspend non-essential surgeries, this has created financial challenges for many of our members. Despite Small Business Administration distributions under the CARE Act, many of our members are unable to sustain income without elective surgery. Further, since many of our members are in private practice, financial sustainability is in question. We urge Congress to find alternative ways to maintain salaries and benefits for DPMs and other surgical specialties.

There are also significant issues obtaining personal protective equipment (PPE). Currently PPE has been limited to first line responders which does not include foot and ankle surgeons. As the crisis continues to progress, foot and ankle surgeons are responding to traumatic surgical cases as well as the management of high-risk diabetic patients. Foot and ankle surgeons require access to PPE in order to safely treat urgent and emergent surgical and medical conditions of the population. Restriction of PPE places both the physician as well as the patient at risk. We urge Congress to expand necessary PPE to foot and ankle surgeons.



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We remain committed to participating in the health-care team and committed to support our country during this unprecedented emergency. Additionally, the College supports state and federal efforts to temporarily mobilize our physicians and surgeons, within their training and expertise, without regulatory impediment. We hope that you take these issues into consideration as you move forward with another stimulus package and wish you safe and healthy days.

Scott C. Nelson, DPM  
President, American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons