**Support The Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2020**

As your constituent and a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, I urge you to support the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2020 (H.R. 6971), introduced by Reps. Eliot Engel and Pete King. This legislation would expand access through Medicare Part B to include medical nutrition therapy for a range of chronic conditions, including those that are contributing significantly to COVID-19 morbidity and mortality.

Recent research shows that obesity is the second greatest risk factor, after older age, for hospitalization among COVID-19 patients, and the CDC lists obesity, diabetes and heart disease among the conditions that put people at greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

The situation is particularly dire for minority populations that have long faced chronic disease health disparities due to socioeconomic inequalities and reduced access to health care, healthful foods and safe places to be active. These disparities are now driving disproportionately high impacts of COVID-19 morbidity and mortality in these populations.

Medical nutrition therapy (MNT) is a cost-effective component of treatment for obesity, diabetes, hypertension, unintended weight loss and other chronic conditions that are contributing to poor COVID-19 outcomes. Despite the potential benefits, Medicare only covers MNT for patients with diabetes or kidney disease, leaving others without access to care. The Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2020 gives Medicare beneficiaries access to the care they need by providing coverage through Medicare Part B for MNT for people with prediabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, malnutrition, eating disorders, cancer, celiac disease, HIV/AIDS and unintentional weight loss. This bill also authorizes nurse practitioners, physician assistants, clinical nurse specialists and psychologists to refer their patients for MNT.

Please show your support for nutrition care for seniors by cosponsoring the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2020 and supporting its inclusion in future COVID-19 relief packages.

To become a cosponsor, contact:

Representative Eliot Engel's (NY-16) office: Sahil Chaudhary (S.Chaudhary@mail.house.gov)