

NILA Member Talking Points and Sample Email to Legislators Saving Access to Laboratory Services Act (SALSA)

The resources below have been drafted to aid NILA members in their outreach to Congress. You can choose to send an email through your federal legislators' official contact form or place a phone call to their D.C. Office.

The first step is to identify your legislators if you don't already know who they are:

- Find your House Representative using your Zip Code [here](#)
- Find your two Senators [here](#)

Next, before you contact your legislators, check to see if they have already cosponsored SALSA. You can find a list of Senate cosponsors [here](#) and House cosponsors [here](#). Tailor the sample email message and talking points below for your individual conversations. **If your legislator is a cosponsor, navigate to *OPTION 2* for the correct email template. If your legislator is not a cosponsor, proceed with *Option 1*.**

Following your outreach, email NILA at nila@nila-usa.org to share that you contacted your representatives and senators. Please be sure to include the name of your members of Congress in the communication. If you receive a response, please forward it to nila@nila-usa.org.

Email Instructions and Sample Draft:

1. Personalize the email template below by replacing **the yellow highlighted sections** with information about you and your laboratory. Please adjust the letter to make it personal, appropriate to your situation, and explain the impact of PAMA cuts to your laboratory.
2. Emails will be forwarded to your representatives and senators through their main websites. Each Member of Congress maintains a federal government website that includes a form to accept emails. Once you have found your House representative and senators through the links above, click his or her name to be directed to the office's official webpage.
3. On the main landing page, look for a "Contact" tab or button.
4. Some members' websites will ask what type of request you are making. If it asks you, select "Comment on Legislation."
5. Fill out the form with **your personal information and home address** (NOT the laboratory's address).
6. Many forms will request a "topic:" select "Health."
7. Copy and paste your personalized and customized email into the space provided.
8. Click "send."

OPTION 1: Legislator is Not a Cosponsor of SALSA

Dear [Representative or Senator Last Name]:

I am a constituent and [your role] at [name of your laboratory].

Independent laboratories are facing potentially drastic cuts to reimbursement on January 1, 2024, due to the flawed implementation of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA) of 2014. The Saving Access to Laboratory Services Act, or SALSA (H.R. 2377/S. 1000), is bipartisan/bicameral legislation that would not only freeze the impending cuts set for January 2024 but would make long-term repairs to PAMA and create a sustainable reimbursement structure for laboratories. **Without congressional action this year, devastating reimbursement cuts will go into effect for laboratories. Please cosponsor SALSA and ensure Congress passes it before the end of the year so laboratories can continue to serve their communities and be prepared to respond to emerging threats to public health.**

[Personalize this email by sharing how PAMA cuts have impacted your lab and the implications of future cuts on your ability to serve the community.]

SALSA would address future cuts by requiring CMS to use a statistically valid, representative sample of the entire laboratory infrastructure, including independent, hospital, and physician office laboratories, to determine Medicare's Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule (CLFS) rates for widely available tests. Importantly, this legislation creates long term protections for laboratories by lowering the caps on cuts from 15% to 5% annually. It also ensures sustainability for Medicare by phasing in a cap on rate increases to ensure costs never go up by more than 5% per year. Finally, it would reduce the frequency of required data reporting periods from every 3 years to every 4 years, mitigating another burden on laboratories.

As a constituent and employer in your state, I urge you to protect our nation's laboratory infrastructure from further devastating cuts and ensure it is prepared to address COVID-19 and any future public health crisis. Please cosponsor SALSA (S. 2377/H.R. 1000) and urge Congressional leadership to ensure it is enacted by Congress this year.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical matter.

[your signature]

OPTION 2: Legislator is a Cosponsor of SALSA

Dear [Representative or Senator Last Name],

I am a constituent and [your role] at [name of your laboratory]. I wanted to express my gratitude for your co-sponsorship of the Saving Access to Laboratory Services Act (SALSA). Today, I urge you to take one more crucial step in ensuring the passage of SALSA by contacting committee and congressional leadership and asking them to bring SALSA to the floor. Now is the time to act to get SALSA passed by the end of this year.

As you are aware, independent laboratories like ours are facing the looming threat of potentially drastic cuts to reimbursement, set to take effect on January 1, 2024. These cuts are a result of the flawed implementation of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA) of 2014. Without congressional action in the form of SALSA this year, we are poised to witness devastating cuts to laboratory reimbursement.

This would have far-reaching implications for our ability to continue serving our communities and responding effectively to emerging threats to public health.

[Personalize this email by sharing how PAMA cuts have impacted your lab and the implications of future cuts on your ability to serve the community.]

As you know, Congress has acted to delay these cuts several times. SALSA represents a long-term sustainable solution for the clinical laboratory infrastructure and the Medicare program.

As a constituent and employer in our state, I implore you to continue safeguarding our nation's laboratory infrastructure from further devastating cuts. Please use your influence to urge congressional leadership to ensure SALSA's swift enactment by Congress this year. Your support for SALSA will not only preserve the integrity and accessibility of laboratory services but also position our nation to effectively address any future public health crises that may arise. Your commitment to pushing SALSA forward is greatly appreciated, and your actions will make a significant difference in our ability to serve our community.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to this critical matter, and I look forward to hearing about your continued efforts in support of SALSA.

[your signature]

Phone Call Instructions

*You can be connected to your legislators through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at: (202) 224-3121. Personalize the talking points below by replacing the **yellow highlighted information** with information specific to you and your laboratory. Please feel free to include other information about how your laboratory would be impacted by future reimbursement cuts.*

OPTION 1: Legislator is Not a Cosponsor of SALSA

- I am a constituent and [your role] at [name of your laboratory] in [state] and I am calling to urge **Representative/Senator's Name** to cosponsor the Saving Access to Laboratory Services Act (SALSA). The bill number for SALSA is S. 1000 in the Senate or H.R. 2377 in the House **[depending on if calling House or Senate]**.
- Clinical laboratories are facing as much as a 15 percent cut to many of the most common clinical laboratory tests on January 1, 2024, and my laboratory needs your help to stop these cuts before they go into effect. SALSA is a bipartisan, bicameral bill that will do this!
- As you may know, the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA) of 2014 tied Medicare reimbursement for laboratory tests to private payer rates. Flawed implementation of PAMA resulted in drastic, unanticipated payment cuts that threaten the ability of community and regional independent laboratories to provide essential laboratory services.
- SALSA will protect laboratories from imminent damaging cuts and will permanently repair the flawed data reporting and rate setting methodology put in place by PAMA to ensure additional drastic cuts are not imposed year after year.
- Without congressional action, further cuts to laboratory services will go into effect in January. **To protect our nation's laboratory infrastructure and to ensure it is prepared to address any**

future public health crisis Congress must enact SALSA before the end of the year. Please cosponsor this important legislation.

- [Name of Laboratory] is also a member of the National Independent Laboratory Association (NILA), which represents regional and community clinical laboratories that often serve communities and patient populations not adequately served by large independent laboratories—including rural areas, underserved city neighborhoods, mid- and small-sized cities and municipalities, congregate facilities, and critical access hospitals.
- Is there a member of the staff with whom NILA can follow up to share further details? [Ask for the appropriate staff member's name and contact information and share with NILA at nila@nila-usa.org]
- Thank you for your time and for making [Representative/Senator's name] aware of my concerns.

OPTION 2: Existing Legislator is a Cosponsor of SALSA

- I am a constituent and [your role] at [name of your laboratory] in [state] and I am calling to express my gratitude for [Representative/Senator's Name]'s co-sponsorship of the Saving Access to Laboratory Services Act (SALSA).
- Today, I urge [Representative/Senator's Name] to take one more crucial step in ensuring the passage of SALSA by contacting committee and congressional leadership and asking them to bring SALSA to the floor. Now is the time to act to get SALSA passed by the end of this year.
- Independent laboratories like ours are currently facing the looming threat of potentially drastic cuts to reimbursement, set to take effect on January 1, 2024. These cuts are a result of the flawed implementation of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA) of 2014. Without congressional action in the form of SALSA this year, we are poised to witness devastating cuts to laboratory services. This would have far-reaching implications for our ability to continue serving our communities and responding effectively to emerging threats to public health.
- Congress has acted to delay these cuts several times and SALSA represents a long-term sustainable solution for the clinical laboratory infrastructure and the Medicare program.
- As a constituent and employer in our state, I implore your boss to continue safeguarding our nation's laboratory infrastructure from further devastating cuts. I am asking [Representative/Senator's Name] to take the critical step of using his/her influence to urge congressional leadership to ensure its swift enactment by Congress this year.
- [Name of Laboratory] is also a member of the National Independent Laboratory Association (NILA), which represents regional and community clinical laboratories that often serve communities and patient populations not adequately served by large independent laboratories—including rural areas, underserved city neighborhoods, mid- and small-sized cities and municipalities, congregate facilities, and critical access hospitals.
- Thank you for your time and for making [Representative/Senator's Name] aware of my asks.