



March 31, 2021

The Honorable Joseph Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write on behalf of the Lupus Research Alliance (LRA), representing Americans living with lupus disease and their families, to express our strong support for Dr. Janet Woodcock to be nominated for Commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). LRA is the largest non-governmental, non-profit funder of lupus research worldwide. We aim to transform treatment while advancing toward a cure by funding the most innovative lupus research, fostering diverse scientific talent, stimulating collaborations, and driving discovery toward better diagnostics, improved treatments and ultimately a cure for lupus. Dr. Woodcock has been very sensitive to the patients' needs and supportive of the LRA's effort to accelerate the development of safe and effective therapies for patients with lupus. I am confident she has the skills, passion, commitment, and experience to be an outstanding FDA leader for all patients.

Lupus is a chronic and complex autoimmune disease which can affect the joints, skin, brain, lungs, kidneys, and blood vessels, causing widespread inflammation and tissue damage in the affected organs. Lupus primarily targets women and disproportionately impacts African Americans, Latinas, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. Our patients have an enormous stake in who the next FDA Commissioner will be.

Dr. Woodcock brings the experience and qualifications needed to ensure that the needs of patients are always front and center at the FDA. She has provided distinguished service to the agency for 37 years and throughout has operated with compassion, integrity, and unparalleled effectiveness. She is a problem-solver, a straight talker, and someone who communicates well with everyone, from patients to industry to Congress.

The lupus community has seen the impact she can have firsthand. She played a key role in a critical and successful 2017 meeting focused on patients that has helped FDA, industry and the academic research community better understand the impact of lupus on patients. She has championed public private partnerships that allow all stakeholders to work collaboratively with FDA to solve difficult challenges, she has been a proponent of understanding the underlying mechanisms of lupus to drive drug development for the disease and has championed innovative trial designs to overcome one of the biggest barriers the community has faced in developing therapies for patients.



All of this has led to retaining interest and engagement in pursuit of novel therapies to treat lupus despite the repeated setbacks in the field.

Dr. Woodcock is a visionary leader who has time and again been the catalyst for positive change for patients. We appreciate your taking our views into consideration and urge you to nominate Dr. Woodcock to serve as the next FDA Commissioner.

We are grateful for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Kenneth M. Farber  
President and CEO, Lupus Research Alliance

cc: The Honorable Xavier Becerra, Secretary, United States Department of Health and Human Services