

July 21, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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

As cases of COVID-19 continue to increase across the country, we, the undersigned stakeholders, urge the Congress to prioritize robust federal funding for the critical testing needed to reopen the country. Swift action is needed to ensure that every American, especially essential workers, frontline healthcare physicians and other clinicians and those at disproportionate risk for COVID-19 have access to vital COVID-19 testing, whether for diagnostic, occupational, return-to-school, public health or virus monitoring purposes.

Given what we know about this virus and the risk of spread by individuals without symptoms, our response to COVID-19 comes down to two essential elements – we must be able to quickly diagnose the virus, and we need to proactively screen to prevent and mitigate its spread. Both are essential, and state, local, tribal, and territorial health jurisdictions, clinical labs, consumer groups, health insurance providers, patient and disease organizations, health and aging services providers, diagnostic test manufacturers, employers and business leaders all recognize the importance of broad access to COVID-19 molecular, antigen, serology and next-generation sequencing (NGS) testing as an integral part of our response to this pandemic.

At the start of this public health emergency, Congress acted quickly to ensure access to COVID-19 testing for all Americans without cost-sharing as part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Expanded access to COVID-19 testing for all individuals, regardless of their coverage status or purpose for receiving the test (i.e. diagnostic, public health or return-to-office), will require additional dedicated and robust federal funding. Without such funding, and with demand increasing, Americans will only see a reduction in access to testing, as well disruptions in clinician, hospital, and laboratory payments, diminished public health surveillance capacity, and higher insurance premiums – all while millions of Americans begin to seek testing in exponential numbers to facilitate return to work, school and other normal activities.

We share the goal of safely reopening the economy and returning to normal business, but this will require a sustained federal investment in testing facilitated by the public health and existing health care delivery system. Such a commitment will serve to support reopening and help to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Dedicated federal funding, and clear coverage guidelines are critical for the scale and degree of testing that is needed to reopen, to reduce the risk of transmission, and to understand the progression of the disease and aid in development of better treatments and vaccines.

We thank you for your continued commitment and work to support Americans through this crisis. For our nation's next essential action, we urge policymakers to prioritize this funding investment so that we can continue to strengthen our response to the COVID-19 crisis, and we remain committed to working with you in this effort.

Sincerely,

1in9L.I.Breast Cancer Organization/Hewlett House  
Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy  
ACLA  
ADAP Advocacy Association  
AdvaMedDx  
AHIP  
AMDA-The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine  
American Association for Respiratory Care  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American College of Physicians  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Health Care Association  
American Society for Microbiology  
America's Physician Groups  
APS Foundation of America, Inc  
Arizona Bioindustry Association, Inc. (AZBio)  
BioKansas  
Black Women's Health Imperative  
Blue Cross Blue Shield Association  
Business Group on Health  
Business Roundtable  
California Hepatitis C Task Force  
California Life Sciences Association (CLSA)  
Community Access National Network (CANN)  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
ICAN, International Cancer Advocacy Network  
Infectious Disease Society for America  
International Association of Hepatitis Task Forces  
International Pemphigus Pemphigoid Foundation  
Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security  
LeadingAge  
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.  
March of Dimes  
Michigan Biosciences Industry Association (MichBio)  
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)  
National Association of Manufacturers  
National Consumers League  
National Health Council  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Retail Federation

New Jersey Rheumatology Association  
Oncology Managers of Florida  
The Gerontological Society of America  
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Virginia Public Health Association