

April 8, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

The National Alliance of Safety-Net Hospitals appreciates very much Congress's designation of \$100 billion in the CARES Act for health care providers to help them with the cost of the investments they needed to make to prepare for the expected influx of COVID-19 patients and to help with cash flow problems arising from the loss of revenue associated with suspending elective procedures. The first part of this aid, which we expect to start seeing in the coming days, will make a big difference for us and for that we are most grateful to you.

The needs created by the pandemic, however, remain great and are growing, so we ask you to provide additional financial assistance to health care providers in the next coronavirus response bill you reportedly are negotiating.

In particular, it has become clear that a growing number of uninsured Americans will be treated for COVID-19, and some of the \$100 billion you designated for health care providers will be used to help pay for that care. Naturally, we support efforts to pay for care for the uninsured, but doing so will not help with the dire needs the original \$100 billion was intended to address. Private safety-net hospitals still need financial assistance if they are to keep their lights on, the supplies coming in, and their teams of courageous caregivers paid. These hospitals, many of which care for especially high proportions of Medicaid patients and many of which are unusually dependent on government payers for their revenue, are at an especially disadvantageous position at this time. Already cash-poor, they are holding on financially today by a slim thread and need the level of supplemental funding you envisioned when you designated \$100 billion for health care providers in the CARES Act – and need this additional assistance quickly.

For these reasons, the National Alliance of Safety-Net Hospitals encourages you to include additional funding for health care providers in any future legislation responding to the COVID-19 emergency – and to pass such legislation very soon. The continued ability of private safety-net hospitals to serve the many Medicaid and Medicare patients in the low-income communities they serve may very well depend on it.

Sincerely,

Ellen J. Kugler
Executive Director

