



*A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care*

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House United States  
House of Representatives H-222,  
US Capitol Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate S-230,  
US Capitol Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
House of Representatives H-204,  
US Capitol Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate S-221,  
US Capitol Washington, DC 20510

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

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,200 Catholic health care systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, sponsors, and related organizations, I am writing to urge that the third supplemental coronavirus response bill include robust provisions directly supporting hospitals, long-term care and other health care organizations. While the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act released by the Senate Majority Leader over the weekend contained several remedies, more needs to be done to ensure that hospitals and other health care providers receive immediate resources to address this pandemic, expand critical operations and protect health care workers, patients and their communities.

In addition to the policy priorities outlined in our letters last week, we specifically ask and reemphasize that legislation include the following:

- Establish a Hospital Emergency Fund of at least \$100 billion that flows directly to hospitals and other health care providers to ensure we have the necessary resources to combat covid-19. We have heard directly from several of our systems that they continue to feel the unprecedented financial strain of this crisis—many are projecting costs over \$100 million in March alone;
- Establish immediate biweekly direct payments to hospitals to ensure financial sustainability of hospital operations using a Medicare periodic interim payments (PIP) type program;
- Establish hospital tax credits to cover the extraordinary costs of uncompensated care and testing, supplies, PPE, emergency screening areas, surge overflow facilities, etc. Allow the tax credits to be used against hospital payroll taxes to immediately free-up hospital cash flow;
- Prioritize the development and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies to covid-19 affected hotspots, specifically surgical and isolation masks, isolation gowns, face shields, eye protection and N95 respirators;
- Eliminate hospital cuts to the Medicaid Disproportionate Hospital Share (DSH) program for

- at least two years;
- Establish a moratorium on the Medicaid MFAR proposed regulation, which will hamstring states ability to fund their state Medicaid match;
  - Further increase the Medicaid FMAP payments to states and include additional provisions to guarantee coverage and access for the most vulnerable;
  - Establish a Medicare add-on outlier payment for inpatient costs to cover the excess costs hospitals incur for these extremely sick patients as well as a Medicare add-on payment equal to 25 percent of the diagnosis-related group rate for those with covid-19;
  - Continue to streamline and ease regulations in telehealth to give community hospitals and health systems the ability to address the growing demand of services in response to covid-19 and protect front line health care workers;
  - Ensure funding is available for health care workers' childcare needs (due to school closures), transportation (due to reduced public transit) and other sources of support so they can continue to work during the coronavirus pandemic;
  - Provide emergency financial assistance to prevent home evictions and housing instability, and robust funding for the Hospital Preparedness Program to provide additional resources to our members.

We continue to draw strength from Catholic health care's history of healing our communities during these public health emergencies and by working collaboratively with government and other stakeholders. CHA hopes that Congress and the Administration continue to work together to protect our communities and prevent further spread of the coronavirus. Thank you for your continued work on solutions to this unprecedented public health crisis. We ask for swift passage of legislation that can deliver the necessary resources to save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sr. Mary Haddad". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "M".

Sr. Mary Haddad, RSM  
President and CEO

CC: House and Senate Members