

March 13, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

On behalf of the more than 590,000 physicians and medical students represented by the combined memberships of the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American College of Physicians, the American Osteopathic Association, and the American Psychiatric Association, we write to thank you for your commitment to addressing the rapidly evolving pandemic of COVID-19, and to urge swift negotiation and passage of H.R. 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

The public health-related proposals in H.R. 6201 are a necessary and important step in strengthening the federal response to COVID-19, increasing access to potentially life-saving medical services, and helping meet essential needs during this challenging time. As the frontline physicians who provide the majority of Americans' most essential medical care, and care for patients in all communities—rural, urban, wealthy and low-income—we appreciate provisions that support states and local communities in addressing immediate public health needs by securing free testing for COVID-19, providing an increase to the Medicaid Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), and allowing people who are sick or caring for ill family members to stay home.

We are also grateful that this legislation will help protect our health care workforce through the development of a comprehensive infectious disease exposure control plan to protect health care workers from exposure. It also addresses food assistance needs resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak. Additionally, the proposal in H.R. 6201 to ensure that older Americans who rely on Medicare and are most at-risk for infection and adverse outcomes due to COVID-19, are able to access diagnostic testing with no beneficiary cost-sharing, including for the associated cost of the visit in order to receive testing, is extremely important.

On behalf of our health care workforce and the patients we serve, we thank you for your quick response to this public health emergency and urge speedy consensus and action on provisions within H.R. 6201 that improve the public health and promote health equity. We urge swift finalization and passage of this legislation and welcome the opportunity to support your efforts and work together to build on this important work.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
American Osteopathic Association
American Psychiatric Association