

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

July 31, 2020

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

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

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator McConnell, Senator Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Congressman McCarthy:

We write to urge you to include additional funding for hospitals and health care providers in the next coronavirus relief package. In Massachusetts, our hospitals continue to be on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic, treating patients, protecting their staff, and ensuring that the pandemic does not disrupt other essential care. In return, they continue to need our support. The recently released proposal from Senate Republicans, which includes a mere \$25 billion in additional funding for the Provider Relief Fund, is insufficient.¹

The coronavirus pandemic continues to impact all parts of our communities, including our health care system. More than 4.5 million cases and more than 150,000 deaths have been reported in the United States thus far.² Hospitals in Massachusetts continue to care for hundreds of patients with COVID-19 on a daily basis.³ In addition, hospitals continue to face higher operating costs as they take precautions to protect their patients and staff from infection, including purchasing protective equipment and practicing physical distancing. Although Massachusetts hospitals have largely resumed preventative care and elective procedures, the suspension of these procedures this spring is estimated to have cost hospitals millions of dollars per day – losses that could take years to recoup, especially with patient volumes continuing to be limited by the need for physical distancing.⁴ In addition, an estimated 27 million Americans have

¹ [McKnight's Long Term Care News](https://www.mcknights.com/news/mcconnell-covid-19-stimulus-proposal-offers-mere-fraction-of-funding-requested-by-providers/), "McConnell COVID-19 stimulus proposal offers mere fraction of funding requested by providers," Liza Berger, July 24, 2020, <https://www.mcknights.com/news/mcconnell-covid-19-stimulus-proposal-offers-mere-fraction-of-funding-requested-by-providers/>.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Cases in the U.S.," updated July 24, 2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html>.

³ Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard, July 23, 2020, <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-dashboard-july-23-2020/download>.

⁴ CNBC, "U.S. hospitals are losing of millions of dollars per day in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic – and recovery may take years," Christina Farr, May 5, 2020, <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/05/hospitals-losing-millions-of-dollars-per-day-in-covid-19-pandemic.html>.

lost employer-sponsored health insurance during the pandemic;⁵ hospitals are likely to experience significant revenue losses from treating more uninsured patients as this economic crisis continues.

These factors combine to create significant financial challenges for hospitals and health care providers in Massachusetts. Hospitals and health care providers have made heroic efforts to contain the coronavirus pandemic, including by putting themselves at risk of infection in order to care for their patients. We owe it to them, and to our constituents who rely on these health care providers for exceptional medical care, to support their ongoing financial needs. The American Nurses Association, American Hospital Association, and American Medical Association have all called on Congress to provide an additional \$100 billion in funding for the Provider Relief Fund in the upcoming coronavirus legislative package.⁶ Instead, the recently-released Republican proposal for the upcoming package includes a mere \$25 billion for the fund.⁷

We urge you to include significant additional funding for the Provider Relief Fund in the next coronavirus emergency supplemental package, in order to ensure that hospitals can continue to serve on the front lines of this public health emergency.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Warren
Edward J. Markey
Seth Moulton
Katherine Clark
Stephen F. Lynch
Joseph P. Kennedy, III
William Keating
James P. McGovern
Lori Trahan
Ayanna Pressley

⁵ Kaiser Family Foundation, “Eligibility for ACA Health Coverage Following Job Loss,” Rachel Garfield, Gary Claxton, Anthony Damico, and Larry Levitt, May 13, 2020, <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/eligibility-for-aca-health-coverage-following-job-loss/>.

⁶ American Medical Association, “Doctors, nurses, hospitals seek \$100 billion in next COVID relief bill,” Andis Robeznieks, July 24, 2020, <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/sustainability/doctors-nurses-hospitals-see-100-billion-next-covid-relief-bill>.

⁷ Modern Healthcare, “Senate GOP proposes \$25 billion provider grants, new liability shield,” July 27, 2020, <https://www.modernhealthcare.com/politics-policy/senate-gop-proposes-25-billion-provider-grants-new-liability-shield>.