

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

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

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

We applaud you for making COVID-19 testing free to the American people. However, we are deeply concerned about the capacity of the private laboratory industry to help you fulfill this promise.

Fulfilling the promise of free and available testing is the first critical step in reversing the trajectory of COVID-19. However, Congress must recognize the strain on an industry that is being asked to step up without any assurance of adequate resources from the government. We believe it is critical that Congress provide a reserve fund that will help labs cover the costs of staffing, supplies and equipment as well as uncompensated care. We fear that without this support, our patients will suffer as access to critical testing will be needlessly lacking.

The availability of reliable, accurate and accessible testing is critical to our patients and fundamental to our recovery as a society, both medically and economically. We urge you to take this into account as you finalize the stimulus packages currently under consideration.

We urge Congress to prioritize the necessary emergency funding to ensure America's clinical laboratories can carry out broad access to COVID-19 testing that is free to each American in need of it.

Thank you for your consideration of this.

Sincerely,

HIV Medicine Association  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security  
March of Dimes  
National Consumers League  
National Health Council  
Global Health Security Roundtable