

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Seema Verma
Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar and Administrator Verma:

As bipartisan Members of the New York Congressional Delegation who represent the state most severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are concerned that the initial \$30 billion tranche of emergency funding for hospitals announced on April 10th did not address the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on New York. We urge you to prioritize hospitals and health care providers in New York and other hot spots in future allocations by distributing funds to the States based on their share of national COVID-19 infections.


As you know, the *CARES Act* provided \$100 billion for hospitals and health care providers to defray the costs of the COVID-19 response and to compensate them for lost revenue. Unfortunately, the initial tranche of \$30 billion, announced by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on April 10th, was allocated to facilities and providers based on their share of 2019 Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) reimbursements. While we understand this decision was meant to distribute funding quickly, it did not address the enormous and disproportionate strain on COVID-19 hot spots like New York.

Across the state of New York, hospitals and health systems report that they are losing hundreds of millions of dollars per month because of cancelled elective procedures, increased staffing and overtime costs, expanded bed capacity, and increased spending on supplies and equipment to meet the surge in COVID-19 patients. The strain on hospitals and health systems is felt even more acutely in regions like the New York metropolitan area where the bulk of COVID-19 patients are being treated at this time. These costs obviously do not exist evenly across the country, and it is therefore crucial that subsequent rounds of funding provide an adjustment for hot spots like New York.

New York is shouldering a disproportionate share of this pandemic with roughly 43% of deaths and 34% of the nation's cases. In fact, New York's caseload alone accounts for than any other country in the world. Therefore, we urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to prioritize funding for New York and other hot spots in future funding distributions by allocating funds to the States based on their share of national COVID-19 infections.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

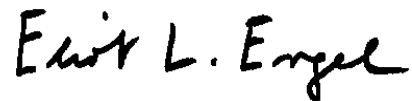
Sincerely,



PETER T. KING
Member of Congress



THOMAS R. SUOZZI
Member of Congress



ELIOT L. ENGEL
Member of Congress

CHARLES E. SCHUMER
United States Senator

KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator

NITA M. LOWEY
Member of Congress

ANTHONY BRINDISI
Member of Congress

PAUL D. TONKO
Member of Congress

JOHN KATKO
Member of Congress

ELISE M. STEFANIK
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TOM REED
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GREGORY W. MEEKS
Member of Congress