



**Minnesota Hospital Association**

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July 23, 2020

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar  
U.S. Senate  
425 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tina Smith  
U.S. Senate  
720 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**Subject: Minnesota Hospitals and Health Systems recommendations for additional federal actions to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic**

Dear Senators Klobuchar and Smith:

I again write to express gratitude for your continued support for Minnesota hospitals and health systems during these unprecedented times and to offer insight as you work on another stimulus package. The stimulus packages have provided critical relief to Minnesota providers this year and are very much appreciated.

As stated in prior letters and in our regular Congressional delegation calls this year, Minnesota hospitals and health systems are facing unprecedented financial challenges while combating COVID-19. **Our financial modeling has estimated losses for Minnesota hospital and health systems in the billions of dollars**—between lost revenues, additional expenses to prepare for a surge, and providing treatment to COVID-19 patients. Please consider the following items as you draft and pass the next stimulus package in the coming weeks.

1. Replenish the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund. A recent report from the American Hospital Association stated that hospitals and health systems across the country will be losing \$323.1 billion in 2020 due to COVID-19. This could be catastrophic to our nation's hospitals including those right here in Minnesota. It is critical that we support our communities and those health care providers that serve them with all the resources needed including resources to support important social influencers of health. **I recommend that you replenish the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund with an additional \$100 billion in the next stimulus package.**
2. Support Our Health Care Heroes. Our front-line health care workers have faced this national emergency courageously and have saved lives while making daily sacrifices to serve others. It is imperative that we support them in and outside of the workplace during these challenging times. **It is only right that we express our gratitude by providing support for their needs in housing, childcare, transportation, and education benefits during the pandemic in addition to a compensation fund for COVID-19 health care workers and their families.**
3. Provide Appropriate Liability Protections. Our hospitals and health systems, in addition to our health care heroes across Minnesota, continue to battle this pandemic as I write to you. Many are making significant sacrifices while working with limited resources and PPE as we work tirelessly to supply them with the critical resources they need. New evidence is emerging daily as we work to discover what the standard of care for diagnosing and treating COVID-19 will be.

**For these reasons, I recommend that Congress provide appropriate liability protections for our hospitals and health systems and front-line medical providers treating patients amid the COVID-19 crisis.**

4. Convert the Accelerated Payment Loan Program to a Grant Program. The Accelerated Payment program under the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has allowed certain hospitals to receive 6 months of advance payments during these unprecedented times. As I have stated to you before, this funding is greatly appreciated, but the repayment terms require repayment to begin 4 months after receiving these funds (which is coming up quickly for many hospitals as COVID-19 numbers continue to rapidly increase in Minnesota) and may lead to some hospitals paying a 10.25% interest rate if they are unable to repay this amount within a year. **I again urge and recommend that Congress convert the program to a grant program and forgive all accelerated payments to all hospitals.**

We are truly grateful for the support that Congress has already provided, but I am certain you agree that much additional support is necessary and urgently needed in support of the health care delivery system that we are so proud of in our great state. I am concerned about our ability to maintain access and provide high-quality health care to all communities across Minnesota now and into the future.

Thank you for your leadership and continued partnership during this pandemic and for your assistance in working to ensure we can keep our health care system strong during and after this national emergency.

Sincerely,



Rahul Koranne, M.D., MBA, FACP  
President & CEO