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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 12, 2020

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
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ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
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COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
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TRANSPORTATION AND MARITIME SECURITY  
OVERSIGHT, MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS  
2ND VICE CHAIR

**PORTS CAUCUS**

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20050

Dear President Trump:

The undersigned California Members of Congress write to urgently request that you issue a federal emergency declaration due to the growing crisis of COVID-19. In addition to the national public health emergency declaration already issued by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, a federal emergency declaration will unlock a greater array of tools California's health care providers can use to contain the disease.

Governor Gavin Newsom has declared a State of Emergency to help the state prepare for broader spread of COVID-19, and our network of 1400 community health centers (CHCs) stands ready to assist in that effort. California's Medicaid State Plan currently prohibits health centers from delivering and billing for telephonic services. In the wake of recent natural disasters in the state, last year the California legislature passed [AB1494](#), which would allow health centers to bill for services delivered through alternative care models (e.g. telephonic visits) during declared statewide emergencies. However, this law cannot be implemented until both the Secretary of Health and Human Services issues a public health emergency declaration and the President issues a federal emergency declaration.

We know that to fight this disease we must be smart about limiting exposure while continuing to ensure Californians receive adequate health care services. Because community health centers provide health care services to 1 in 3 Medi-Cal recipients and 1 in 6 Californians, they can be a huge part of our state's proactive response to containing and controlling the spread of COVID-19.

As of the writing of this letter, there are 2 confirmed deaths in California and 168 positive cases. In partnership with the state and local and county health departments, California's CHCs are working tirelessly to support the COVID-19 response and limit the growth of these statistics.

We stand in solidarity in working to stop the spread of COVID-19. We urge you to declare a federal state of emergency and allow California to utilize innovative health care methods in this time of crisis.

Regards,



Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



Katie Porter  
Member of Congress



Doris Matsui  
Member of Congress



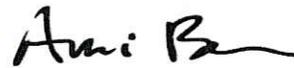
Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



Ami Bera, MD  
Member of Congress



Mark Takano  
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



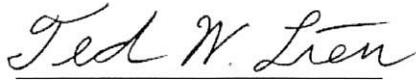
Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



Mike Levin  
Member of Congress



Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



JUAN VARGAS  
Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress

CC:

Vice President Mike Pence, White House  
COVID-19 Task Force Chair

Seema Verma, Administrator for the Centers  
for Medicare and Medicaid Services, White  
House COVID-19 Task Force Participant