

May 18, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

As the leaders of America's preeminent children's hospitals, we thank you for your work in support of the health care system during this challenging time. We write to request that allocations of the remaining relief from the Public Health and Social Services Fund (PHSSEF) fully reflect the contribution made by children's hospitals to fighting the pandemic and reflect the indispensable role we play for the patient populations we serve. Specifically, we ask that an immediate tranche is released to support the continued viability of the health care infrastructure for children.

We are grateful that the second tranche of PHSSEF reached our hospitals and still, the economic impact incurred by our institutions as a result of our response to COVID-19 continues to create catastrophic losses. The damage the crisis is creating cannot be reversed without the continued support and certainty that only the federal government can provide.

Like our adult hospital counterparts throughout the country, we positioned our institutions to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19 both from the outset and in the years prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. We made strategic investments in research, biocontainment units, disaster preparedness, and community health engagement. Following federal and state guidelines, we cancelled non-essential procedures, transformed our hospitals to prepare for an influx of pediatric and adult patients from our communities, and took all efforts to mitigate the risk to our physicians, nurses, staff, patients, and families. We did this at considerable cost. America's children's hospitals have experienced an over 40% decline in revenues and are currently incurring approximately \$2 billion in losses per month.

We stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our adult hospital counterparts and share many of the same burdens, yet children's hospitals are unique in the health care ecosystem. Our hospitals serve as the health care safety net for all the children in our communities, regions, and the nation, and represent global centers for excellence, serving children from around the world. We are teaching hospitals, training the nation's pediatricians and pediatric subspecialists who serve patients across the country now and for decades to come. Our researchers make, and will continue to make, revolutionary breakthroughs. Therapies and treatments for pediatrics are often very different from adults and treating children is expensive. Treating children also gives our hospitals a very different payer mix from hospitals primarily focused on adult care.

Most of our revenues comes from the Medicaid program and necessitates that any formula or metric used to calculate relief funding reflect our service to disproportionate numbers of Medicaid patients. All the national relief benefits advanced through the Medicare program cannot reach or support our children's hospitals. Failure to provide immediate relief to children's hospitals will weaken our infrastructure and risk our current capability to care for all the nation's children.

To sustain this critical infrastructure for our nation's children, we ask you to release a further immediate tranche of funding that includes relief for our children's hospitals. Our losses continue to grow and our ability to contain the damage to children's programs decreases with every day that passes. We appreciate the need to review data

and are ready to support you in this, but we believe continued delays in relief allocations are having very real repercussions for the children and families we serve.

Our hospitals, doctors, nurses, staffs, patients, and patient families desperately need your administrative team to be champions of children's health by providing children's hospitals with the financial relief and greater certainty this funding can provide to weather this storm. We look forward to working with you to maintain our capacity and further guarantee the groundbreaking, world-leading children's health care that our nation deserves.

Thank you for your work and assistance on behalf of the nation's children's hospitals.

Sincerely,



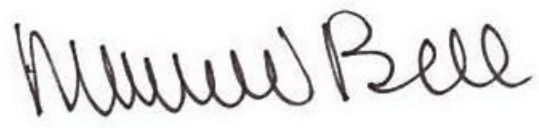
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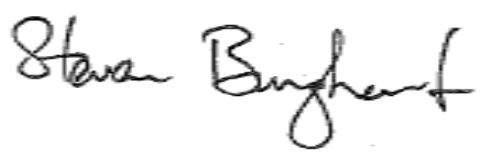
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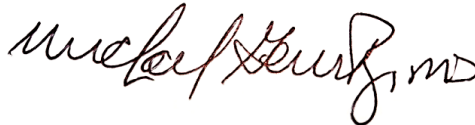
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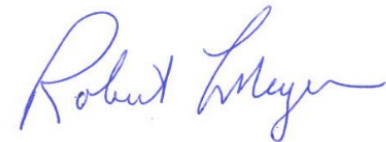
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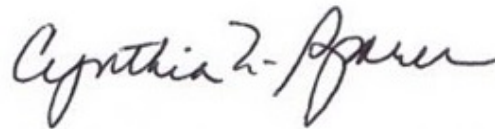
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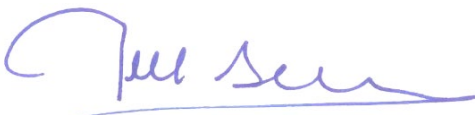
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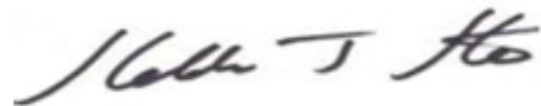
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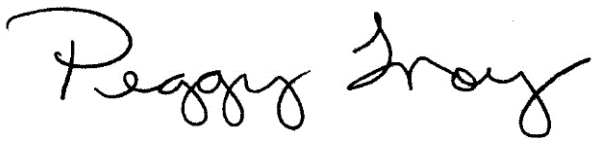
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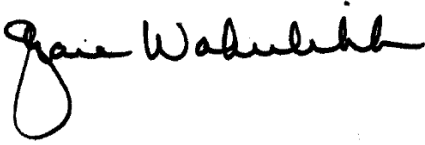
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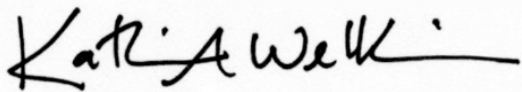
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