

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 16, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Azar,

Under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Congress has given the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund \$100 billion to reimburse "eligible health care providers for health care related expenses or lost revenues that are attributable to coronavirus." We ask that children's hospitals have access to these funds, so that they can continue to provide lifesaving care to our nation's children during this health crisis.

All medical facilities are experiencing financial strain due to required cancelations of elective care, increased costs of personal protective equipment for both patients and providers, and increased use of screening and detection services. Children's hospitals are no exception. Since mid-March, they have seen revenue losses up to 50 percent and operating cost increases of more than 10 percent. Overall, the children's hospital industry is projected to suffer over \$10 billion in losses during this crisis. If children's hospitals are unable to remain operational due to these losses, millions of children will lose access to high quality medical care.

Currently, much of the support for hospitals has been focused on Medicare and COVID-19 patient care volumes. On April 10, 2020, HHS announced \$30 billion in direct payments to providers based on their share of total Medicare fee for service reimbursements in 2019. For children's hospitals, Medicaid is the payor for more than 50 percent of all patient volumes. Consequently, children's hospitals will not benefit from these payments, or the recently issued pre-payment of Medicare costs. While preliminary data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that children are less likely to be hospitalized or suffer severe symptoms from COVID-19, the situation is constantly evolving. We cannot allow children's hospitals to go uncompensated for their COVID-19 services.

Congress has enabled HHS to use its discretion to reimburse health care providers for their losses. We urge you to include children's hospitals among those entities receiving aid, so that they can continue to give children access to high-quality medical services.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,



WARREN DAVIDSON
Member of Congress

ROBERT B. ADERHOLT
Member of Congress

TROY BALDERSON
Member of Congress

ANDY BIGGS
Member of Congress

KEN BUCK
Member of Congress

TED BUDD
Member of Congress

EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER
Member of Congress

STEVE CHABOT
Member of Congress

RICK CRAWFORD
Member of Congress

ANTHONY GONZALEZ
Member of Congress

PAUL A. GOSAR, D.D.S.
Member of Congress

MICHAEL GUEST
Member of Congress

JAHANA HAYES
Member of Congress

DEBBIE LESKO
Member of Congress

SHEILA JACKSON LEE
Member of Congress

DAVID P. ROE, M.D.
Member of Congress

STEVE STIVERS
Member of Congress

MICHAEL TURNER
Member of Congress

ANN WAGNER
Member of Congress

MICHAEL WALTZ
Member of Congress

BRAD WENSTRUP, D.P.M.
Member of Congress

ROB WOODALL
Member of Congress