

Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C.

April 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Capitol Building, H-232
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Capitol Building, H-204
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and Related
Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As Members of the New York Congressional Delegation who represent the state most severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, we write to urge you to provide \$100 million in the upcoming, fourth coronavirus response package for a new grant program within the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to support School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs). Currently, SBHCs across the nation provide invaluable comprehensive health care services to over two million young people. Increased funding for these centers would expand access to the much needed physical and mental health needs of students and families impacted by COVID-19, even while schools remain closed.

Indefinite school closures have created a gap in primary and behavioral health services as some SBHCs that operate in school facilities have been forced to shut their doors. For centers that are still operating, school closures have caused a major loss of revenue, yet continue to remain a vital resource to individuals and families during these unprecedented times.

In rural areas, SBHCs are both supporting their sponsoring hospitals and community clinics as well as keeping some centers open, often at the request of the schools and communities themselves. These centers help address the needs of adolescents and their families, especially when the nearest hospital or clinic can be a county away with no public transit. SBHCs in some cases are the community healthcare provider, including setting up their own COVID-19 screening processes.

In urban areas, hospital sponsored SBHC staff have been redeployed to meet the needs of their already disproportionately underserved and impacted communities. From triage tents to phone

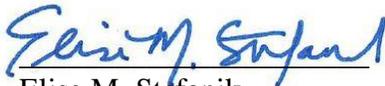
lines, ER screeners, and inpatient services, SBHC staff are serving at every possible level to abate this extremely volume-heavy crisis. It remains absolutely necessary, especially in hard-hit states like New York that these workers can continue providing these services for the public.

SBHCs have also experienced a significant increase in demand for their life-saving telemedicine services during this pandemic. A fear of even going to a hospital or clinic coupled with increased domestic violence episodes as a result of stay at home orders is exacerbating existing health issues among individuals and families. In some instances, SBHC telehealth visits are the only outlet many families have. SBHCs anticipate the surge of unmet need will require swift action before the next school year can begin - action that can only be served with increased funding and support.

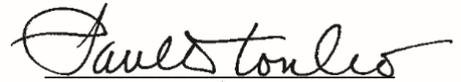
New York alone has over 260 centers, serving more than 250,000 pre-K-12th grade students in urban and rural medically underserved communities. Our concern is that once our nation begins the long journey back to normal, lost revenue will endanger SBHCs, a critically important safety net provider to New York's most vulnerable populations. That's why we are asking you to include \$100 million for the nation's SBHCs in the fourth federal stimulus package. Not only does this directly support centers, especially in New York, it offsets the burden on our sponsoring hospitals and community health centers.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



John Katko
Member of Congress



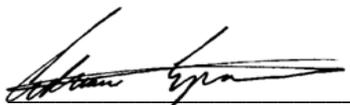
Max Rose
Member of Congress



Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress



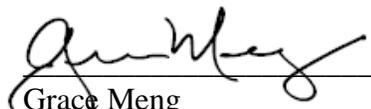
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Hakeem Jeffries
Member of Congress