

June 22, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leaders McConnell and McCarthy:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write in strong support of the proposal included in the American Jobs Plan to invest \$30 billion over 4 years to better protect Americans from future pandemics. These funds can create new U.S. jobs in public health, science and technology innovation, and domestic medical countermeasures infrastructure.

Given the devastating consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. should aim to achieve an ambitious but achievable goal of creating a pandemic-free future. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to include this \$30 billion investment in a funding vehicle this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the national and international consequences that deadly infectious disease epidemics can cause. Over the past two decades, outbreaks of SARS, Ebola, influenza, Zika and others have cost the U.S. billions in lost productivity. The profound effects of this and other pandemics must galvanize the U.S. government to do everything in its power to prevent this from happening again.

In addition to naturally occurring threats, rapid advances in the biological sciences and an eroding norm against the development and use of biological weapons increase the chance that biotechnology could be used to create novel pathogens with the potential to start major epidemics or pandemics.

The next fast-moving, novel infectious disease pandemic could be right around the corner. The United States must be prepared to move faster when the next potential pandemic emerges to avoid catastrophic loss of life and economic disruption. A significant new investment in pandemic preparedness is vital to our country's economy and national security.

This new investment should support faster vaccine development and production, a more robust Strategic National Stockpile, increased research regarding possible disease threats, robust public health infrastructure and sequencing technologies, training personnel for epidemic and pandemic response, and related biopreparedness and biosecurity initiatives. The COVID-19 supplemental funds provided to date do not meet these longer-term needs. We urge Congress to provide \$30 billion over 4 years to protect Americans from future pandemics, before the next virus threatens the globe.

We thank you for your leadership on ending the COVID-19 pandemic and look forward to being strong partners with Congress on pandemic preparedness in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Nursing

**Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security
at the Bloomberg School of Public Health**

American Geriatrics Society

Mayo Clinic

Association of Academic Health Centers

National Rural Health Association

Association of American Medical Colleges

Nuclear Threat Initiative

Association of Public Health Laboratories

Open Philanthropy

Biotechnology Innovation Organization

Resolve to Save Lives

Coalition to Stop Flu

Schmidt Futures

Emergency Nurses Association

Society of Critical Care Medicine

Federation of American Scientists

The Gerontological Society of America

Global Health Technologies Coalition

**The National Association of Directors of
Nursing Administration**

Healthcare Ready

**The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of
America**

Health Industry Distributors Association

Vaccinate Your Family

International Safety Equipment Association