

December 9, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States 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 McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

We the undersigned group of public health experts, medical professionals and trainees, scientists, consumer advocates, students, essential workers, social service providers, faith-based, disability rights, patients, farm workers, children's advocacy, social justice and health care organizations write in support of the *COVID Community Care Act (H.R. 8192/S.4941)* and urge swift passage and implementation of this essential piece of legislation.

This bill recognizes the essential role local non-profits, faith-based and community-based organizations have played in addressing Covid-19 through culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach for testing, contact tracing and the provision of resources such as access to food, medicine, and personal protective equipment, as well as the resource coordination necessary to address job and housing insecurity. No equitable and effective approach to COVID-19 response can be done without the insight and expertise of these local organizations.

The Act appropriates grants for non-profits, faith-based and community organizations to engage in a full spectrum of support measures to medically underserved communities- defined with a rate of infection, hospitalization, or death above the national average, and a high percentile of racial and ethnic minorities.

Science tells us that the most effective way to stop the virus is to have strong community mitigation practices, paired with supported isolation and quarantine for all those exposed to or who are diagnosed with Covid-19. To reach the most impacted communities, we have to enable community leaders who know how to mobilize resources in their communities, adapt to cultural norms, and speak the languages of their neighbors in order to help people get tested and seek care so they can safely quarantine and isolate. *The COVID Community Care Act* would accomplish this by funding contact tracing support from tracers who have experience in medically underserved communities and have relationships with the individuals who live there.

Grant money would also cover the costs of testing, procurement of PPE, and the ability to reach out to address health precautions and assistance programs through cultural and linguistic-appropriate social marketing campaigns. This groundwork will also build the system we need to effectively roll out vaccines with the support of communities that are hardest hit by COVID-19.

COVID-19 has laid bare the results of decades of policies that create health care disparity, particularly in communities of color. Swift passage of the COVID Community Care Act will begin to address these critical issues and provide communities with the support needed to stop COVID-19.

Sincerely,

AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families
Allergy & Asthma Network
Alliance for Retired Americans
American Medical Student Association
American Muslim Health Professionals
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles
Asian Resources, Inc.
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs
Casa San Jose
Center for Health and Social Care Integration at Rush University Medical Center
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Aid
Church World Service
Colorado Latino Leadership Advocacy and Research Organization, CLLARO
Community Catalyst
Equality California
Families USA
Farmworker Justice
Fitzhugh Mullan Institute for Health Workforce Equity
HIV Medicine Association
Justice in Aging
Last Mile Health
Los Angeles Regional Food Bank
Michigan Immigrant Rights Center
MomsRising
NASTAD
National Association of Social Workers
National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network
National Coalition for Latinxs with Disabilities
National Community Action Foundation
National Community Action Partnership
National Consumers League
National Council of Jewish Women
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Immigration Law Center
National WIC Association

Navigate MN/Unidos MN
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Partners In Health
Poligon Education Foundation
Silver State Equality-Nevada
South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center
The AIDS Institute
The Children's Partnership
The Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama
The League of Women Voters of the United States
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
UnidosUS
Union for Reform Judaism
Young Invincibles