

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 6, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-307 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Lowey, Ranking Member Granger, Chair DeLauro, and Ranking Member Cole:

We are writing to urge you to include robust funding for additional NIH research in your next COVID-relief package. As this pandemic continues to ravage the United States, with over 12 million cases and record numbers of positive cases in recent days, we know it will take many months before the United States is widely vaccinated and Americans will continue to contract the disease in the coming months.

In addition to the immediate crisis, there are also long-term health consequences to be considered, the extent of which are still unknown. Current indications point to potential long-term to permanent effects from COVID-19, even on patients who only experienced mild symptoms, and possibly those who were asymptomatic. Potential long-term effects include a lifelong condition that is similar to chronic fatigue syndrome and permanent scarring on the heart that can lead to spontaneous heart attacks. Scientists believe there may be the potential to treat these conditions before they become permanent, but the window for intervention appears to be narrow, and more in-depth research is needed. NIH is in the process of designing a major trial to identify the scope of the problem and test potential treatments for long-term symptoms.

To accomplish these goals, we are requesting \$3.1 billion in funding for NIH to conduct this and other critical research. Specifically, the money would be used for the following purposes:

- Studying Post-Acute-Covid-19 syndrome
- Additional therapeutic discovery
- Behavioral research to increase vaccine acceptance

- Optimization of business/community/home/school-based point-of-care testing for COVID-19
- Mental Health, Behavioral and Social Science research
- Identify genetic factors to Coronavirus susceptibility and severity
- Impact of COVID-19 on pregnant women and children
- Diversity engagement in research
- Planning for the next pandemic
- Bridging gaps between NIH and all of pharma clinical trial networks together to expand and improve the nation's capacity to maximize quickly the testing of treatments and vaccines
- Impact of COVID-19 on other vulnerable populations
- Estimating the health impact of economic shutdown

If left unchecked, long-term damage from COVID-19 has the potential to have a lasting health effect for decades to come, and it is crucial that we give NIH the resources they need to mitigate this risk to the extent possible. While we appreciate that you are juggling many important priorities, our investment in science can influence the trajectory of public health for a generation, and so we urge you to fulfill our funding request. Thank you for your consideration, and please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Raul Ruiz, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Brad Wenstrup, D.P.M.  
Member of Congress