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March 19, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
The U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Republican Leader  
The U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Democratic Leader  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

The physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA) appreciate the recent actions taken by Congress and the Administration to help physicians, other health professionals, and hospitals on the frontlines of care meet the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic. Improved resource allocation, regulatory flexibility, guidelines, and financial assistance are important steps that will go a long way toward providing physicians with the support they need to meet the nation's health care needs in these extraordinary times.

As you work to develop the third phase of the economic stimulus plan, the AMA urges additional steps to help preserve the viability of physician practices that are struggling to meet the needs of their patients and staff as they confront revenue shortages resulting from deferring visits and procedures as part of the system-wide effort to conserve personal protective equipment and support the social distancing that is necessary to curb community spread of COVID-19. **Direct financial support, grants, interest free loans and other mechanism should be enacted to ensure that the health care workforce remains intact and able to address the challenges of this crisis as well as the ongoing health care needs of all of our patients.** To further support physician practice viability, Congress should suspend the current Medicare sequester and postpone payment reductions mandated by the MIPS program.

**Additional necessary steps include:**

**Medical supplies.** It is vital to assure stable access to critical personal protective equipment and supplies to protect health care workers and support care for patients. Key steps have been taken, but it is impossible to stress too strongly the importance of production and distribution to keep our health care workforce healthy and to provide the respiratory support that our patients need.

**Good Samaritan protections.** Inconsistencies in current federal and state laws could subject physicians and other medical professionals to medical liability exposure when they volunteer to provide medical services across state lines. Draft legislation, entitled the Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act, would provide protections during a federally declared disaster, national emergency, or other public health

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emergency while respecting existing medical liability laws in individual states. We urge Congress to include such protections in the phase 3 stimulus package.

**Workforce support.** We ask for an expansion of federal funding for paid family, medical, and sick leave, and to ensure that physicians have immediate access to federal grants, interest-free loans, or tax relief to offset these costs.

Thank you again for all that you are doing to bring about the necessary resources and policy changes to bear that will support physicians in doing what they do best—caring for patients in their time of need. The nation’s physicians are up to the challenges presented by COVID-19, but they continue to need your support. Thank you for considering our requests.

Sincerely,

James L. Madara, MD