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April 3, 2020

Mr. Bill McBride  
Executive Director  
National Governors Association  
Hall of States  
444 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 267  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. McBride:

On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and our physician and medical student members, I am writing to urge the National Governors Association (NGA) and its member governors to support statewide, emergency orders to close non-essential businesses, limit non-essential activities and prohibit gatherings during the critical stages of the response to the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Physical distancing is the only effective mechanism to slow the exponential spread of the virus and decrease the anticipated spike in COVID-19 cases across all states. As physicians, we are honored to serve and put our lives on the front line to protect our patients and communities, but we need the help of policymakers as we take on this immense challenge. It is vital that states keep residents at home to avoid overwhelming our health care systems and depleting the equipment, resources and manpower needed to care for the influx of critically ill patients.

Viruses know no borders. Therefore, a uniform response to the pandemic across all states is critical and stay-at-home orders are a necessary defense to turn the tide against COVID-19. We **strongly urge** all states to issue stay-at-home orders to residents if they have not done so already. These directives will save lives.

The AMA stands ready to assist NGA and governors across the country in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James L. Madara". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

James L. Madara, MD