

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 8, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on  
Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on  
Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Vice Chairman Leahy:

Thank you for your Committee's work to date in appropriating much-needed resources to support our nation's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding made available under each piece of coronavirus-related legislation has been essential to the work conducted by agencies and organizations on the front lines of the outbreak.

As states begin to prepare for the next phase of this pandemic, we ask that you increase support for public health training programs to protect the pipeline of qualified health workers who will be essential to monitoring this virus in the months and years to come. Specifically we ask that you provide an additional \$20 million in funding to support Regional Public Health Training Center (PHTC) Programs in any forthcoming legislation to address the coronavirus pandemic.

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) currently funds ten PHTCs across the country. These critical programs provide specialized training and technical assistance to public health students and professionals, helping to meet the workforce needs of state and local public health agencies.

Looking ahead, a robust pipeline of qualified public health workers will be critical to states' responses to the next phase of the coronavirus outbreak. States must develop and administer COVID-19 testing programs to monitor new cases, and establish contact tracing strategies to mitigate community spread of the virus. The need for qualified professionals supported by expert technical assistance will only continue to grow as states lift stay-at-home orders and businesses begin to reopen. Additional resources delivered to PHTCs would have an exponential impact on the capacity of local public health departments to fulfill their missions by providing training and human resources that they can use to scale up operations in response to the pandemic.

We look forward to working with you to support the efforts of our constituent public health agencies who are working tirelessly to stem the spread of this virus and enable our communities to return to regular order. Thank you for your consideration of this request.



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator

Sincerely,



Tom Udall  
United States Senator

/s/ Jacky Rosen  
Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator

/s/ Martin Heinrich  
Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator

/s/ Tina Smith  
Tina Smith  
United States Senator

/s/ Margaret Wood Hassan  
Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator