

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 29, 2020

Governor Larry Hogan
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan,

We are working at the federal level to provide funding and resources to Maryland to bolster the state and local responses to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. We are pleased that the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act, signed into law on April 24, 2020, included \$11 billion for states, localities, territories, and tribes for necessary expenses to develop, purchase, administer, process, and analyze COVID-19 tests. The State of Maryland is receiving approximately \$205 million from this funding. As you are aware, each state receiving funds must submit to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) its plan for COVID-19 testing, including goals for the remainder of calendar year 2020. As part of this plan, we urge you to outline how you will target testing resources to the hardest hit communities in Maryland, particularly communities of color that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Additionally, we urge you to make your plan submission public so Marylanders have a full understanding of the State's testing goals and how these federal resources will be put to use.

In the plan required by CDC, the State must outline month-by-month figures of the number of tests needed and month-by-month estimates of laboratory and testing capacity (including related to workforce, equipment and supplies, and available tests). Additionally, it must include a description of how the resources will be used for testing, including easing any COVID-19 community mitigation policies. The purpose of the funding is to support state efforts in meeting the testing goals laid out in their COVID-19 testing plans, including purchasing testing supplies. Testing, in addition to robust contact tracing and effective isolation of individuals exposed to the virus, are critical components of a safe reopening. While the State is making progress to expand testing capacity, we are still hearing from localities that more testing capacity is needed, which will be particularly important as the state continues to move forward with reopening.

We are also still seeing disturbing racial and ethnic disparities in our state's COVID-19 infection and mortality rates, which we believe necessitates an aggressive, targeted strategy. For the COVID-19 cases that have race and ethnicity data available, Black Marylanders comprise more than 35% of COVID-19 cases and over 40% of deaths, despite only making up 30% of the population. Hispanics make up 10% of Maryland's population and represent 30% of cases. The \$205 million in federal funds provide our state with important resources to develop a comprehensive testing strategy to address this serious problem.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. We will continue to work at the federal level to secure resources for the State of Maryland, and we look forward to working with you to expand our state's testing capacity.

Sincerely,

/s/ Chris Van Hollen

Chris Van Hollen
U.S. Senator

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin

Benjamin L. Cardin
U.S. Senator

/s/ Steny H. Hoyer

Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress

/s/ C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress

/s/ John P. Sarbanes

John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress

/s/ Kweisi Mfume

Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress

/s/ Anthony G. Brown

Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

/s/ Jamie Raskin

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

/s/ David Trone

David Trone
Member of Congress