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

Thank you for your leadership and work to provide relief to the American people during the COVID-19 epidemic through the passage of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. With negotiations for the next COVID-19 relief package underway, we write to convey our strong support that future legislation include a provision that forgives Medicare accelerated payments’ interest rates and pursues full loan forgiveness for hospitals and other providers.

Our nations’ hospitals have invested heavily to prepare for the pandemic. They canceled tens-of-thousands of elective surgeries and non-emergent patient tests at the government’s request to help assure there is adequate hospital capacity, preserve gear and equipment, and reduce the risk of unnecessary patient spread. This major shift has put some of America’s hospitals on the brink of financial disaster.

Without further support, hospitals will face another financial crisis just four months from now as the government begins to withhold Medicare payments for services provided after the pandemic fades and until the loans are repaid. While the $175 billion provider grant program, designed to provide support to all providers, is helpful, much more support is needed. In the absence of substantially more financial support, it is nearly certain that many hospitals will be forced to close or significantly reduce health care services over the next several months – and perhaps longer. This would be a tragic consequence, especially if the country is hit with another round of the viral epidemic in the near future.

In addition to grant funding and new loan programs with zero or low interest rates, Congress should provide loan forgiveness to ensure the additional financial support hospitals and other providers direly need. Forgiveness would be for health care related expenses or lost revenues that are directly attributable to coronavirus. And, just like the requirement in the provider grant program, providers electing to have their advance payment loans forgiven would be obligated to abstain from balance
billing any patient for COVID-related treatment. In addition, Congress would mandate criteria for transparency and accountability of the loan forgiveness.

Emergency funding requests to combat the unprecedented times we face do not come lightly. We recognize the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund faces imminent concern necessitating a long-term financial solution, and Congress is committed to its solvency. Furthermore, we are also committed to providing timely aid and necessary relief for our hospital caregivers and providers. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We stand ready to work with you in every way to support the men and women on the frontline caring for those with the coronavirus.

Sincerely,

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress

Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress

Ted Deutch
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress

Tim Ryan
Member of Congress

Mike Turner
Member of Congress

Anthony Gonzalez
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

Steve King
Member of Congress

Chris Stewart
Member of Congress

Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress

Steve Stivers
Member of Congress

Max Rose
Member of Congress

James Comer
Member of Congress
Bill Johnson  
Member of Congress  

Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress  

Susan Wild  
Member of Congress  

Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress  

Rodney Davis  
Member of Congress  

Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress  

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress  

Ted S. Yoho, D.V.M.  
Member of Congress  

Abby Finkenauer  
Member of Congress  

Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress  

Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress  

Xochitl Torres Small  
Member of Congress  

Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress  

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress  

Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress  

Colin Allred  
Member of Congress  

Bruce Westerman, P.E.  
Member of Congress  

Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress  

Troy Balderson  
Member of Congress  

David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress  

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress  

David Scott  
Member of Congress  

Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress  

Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress  

Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress  

Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress  

Debbie Dingell  
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David P. Joyce  
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Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress  

Doug Collins  
Member of Congress
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