



September 29, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
317 Russell S.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
322 Hart S.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Population Health Alliance (PHA) is the industry's only multi-stakeholder professional and trade association solely focused on population health management. We represent stakeholders from across the health care and ancillary services ecosystem that seek to improve health outcomes, optimize medical and administrative spend, and drive affordability and access.

For over 20 years, we've worked to establish the principles of population health management as pillars of our health care system by expanding awareness of the most innovative evidence-based and outcome-driven interventions, education on population health benchmarks and principles, and research into the unique ways population health management principles are helping improve health while increasing value to payers such as the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

On behalf of our Government Affairs committee, I write to you today with an urgent request of support and COVID-19 related relief for the national nonprofit charitable organizations that provide community-based programs which address medical and social determinants of health, and promote health and wellbeing for vulnerable populations. Nonprofits represent the nation's third largest industry,



with more than 12 million employees who are at the forefront of helping Americans through these difficult times. But 1.6 million of these jobs were lost between February and May, and millions more cuts are on the horizon.

According to the front-line experiences of our member organizations and verified by the CDC<sup>1</sup>, there is a substantially increased risk of serious illness and death from COVID-19 for people of racial or ethnic minority communities. Further, low-wage workers have also disproportionately shouldered the economic burden of the pandemic mitigation measures forced by government entities at all levels. This disproportionate impact will ultimately damage the fabric of our society and it calls loudly for robust national action to address systemic inequities in our system.

Population Health managers in care delivery organizations and health insurance plans across the country rely on the skills, expertise, and resources of nonprofit charitable organizations to fill the gaps the medical care team cannot reach. For example, a partnership between a charitable organization in Illinois and a hospital worked together to get a frequent emergency room patient connected to appropriate behavioral health programs, resulting in improved health for the patient and saving the payer over \$150,000 for just one patient<sup>2</sup>. This example illustrates just one of many ways charitable organizations play a critical role in the health care of our fellow Americans.

YMCAs across the country are another example of how charitable nonprofits impact health outcomes and costs. Shifting health and well-being “in-person” programs to “virtual” programming has enabled millions of Americans, including older adults to have access to evidence-based and evidence-informed health and wellness programs offered by the Y. These evidence-based programs impact health care costs, for example, health improvements and costs savings with CMS of \$2650 per senior with the YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program<sup>3</sup>. Additional services YMCAs have provided since the pandemic began include hundreds of thousands of calls to ensure seniors had access to pharmaceuticals and food while also



checking on social isolation, emergency childcare sites for health care workers and other essential personnel, and 1,300 emergency feeding sites. All of these services have significant impact on health care utilization and outcomes.

Non-governmental charitable organizations are often the first line of support for those struggling with physical and economic health. Limitations of their ability to perform important services during the pandemic will have substantial impact on health care access, outcomes, and costs to the nation as a whole. There are several areas these charitable nonprofits need your support:

- Extend and expand the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) by enabling a second round of funding for all nonprofits and modifying the eligibility criteria to match the needs of charitable nonprofits of all sizes;
- Enact and expand grant and funding programs, such as the proposed WORK NOW Act or the Employee Retention Tax Credit, to help nonprofits retain employees, scale service delivery, and create new jobs;
- Authorize and require the Federal Reserve to quickly finalize a nonprofit lending facility under the Main Street Lending Program (MSLP) that is tailored to accommodate mid-size nonprofits including language similar to H.R. 6800 that offers a loan forgiveness option;
- Expand the above-the-line or universal charitable deduction in the CARES Act by enacting the provisions in S. 4032 / H.R. 7324 increasing the amount to one-third of the standard deduction;
- Extend the giving incentives enacted in the CARES Act through 2021; and
- Increase the federal unemployment insurance reimbursement for self-insured nonprofits to 100% of costs.

Thank you for your leadership in passage of the various pieces of legislation that have helped curb the substantial negative impacts of COVID-19 and its related



fallout on the health of the communities we serve. The impacts of the pandemic remain both substantial and disproportionately shouldered. We believe that the supportive measures outlined above will go a long way in maintaining healthy behaviors throughout an extremely fragile fall season. If you have any questions, or would like additional information please contact Brent Ling, Executive Director, at 202.737.5476 (bling@populationhealthalliance.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helene S Forte".

Helene Forte, RN, MS, PAHM  
Chair of PHA Government Affairs

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/race-ethnicity.html>
2. <https://nff.org/sites/default/files/paragraphs/file/download/Healthy-Outcomes-Initiative-Report.pdf>
3. <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/ActuarialStudies/Downloads/Diabetes-Prevention-Certification-2016-03-14.pdf>