



March 20, 2020

The Honorable Pat Toomey  
United States Senate  
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Toomey:

The Safety-Net Association of Pennsylvania (SNAP), a coalition of private safety-net hospitals that provide 40 percent of Medicaid-covered hospital inpatient care in the commonwealth, thanks you and your colleagues for all you have done to help hospitals prepare to fulfill their responsibility to their communities and their patients during these especially challenging times. We appreciate everything you are doing to continue to give us the tools we need to deal with the COVID-19 national health emergency.

By now, a number of state and national hospital groups have written to you and your colleagues outlining some of the things they believe hospitals need in the next COVID-19 stimulus bill to enhance the ability of hospitals to serve their patients and their communities. We share their views and would like to bring to your attention three matters that especially interest Pennsylvania's private safety-net hospitals: ensuring cash flow in the coming months, eliminating Medicaid DSH cuts, and protecting health care providers from any new, burdensome policies.

- ***Private safety-net hospitals need immediate and significant help with cash flow.*** As requested by the federal government and others, we will be suspending or limiting elective surgery so we can focus our resources on COVID-19 patients. This will create a cash-flow problem for us: while we will be doing everything we can to care for our patients and will be expending considerable resources doing so, our revenue will decline. We urge you to include in the next COVID-19 stimulus bill a provision that would provide up-front funding to replace the revenue we will lose by suspending elective procedures and to help compensate private safety-net hospitals for the considerable costs we are incurring to prepare for the surge of patients we have been told to expect.
- ***We seek the elimination of Affordable Care Act-mandated reductions of Medicaid DSH allotments to the states.*** At a time when hospitals are facing the gravest threat to the public health that they have seen in many years, they should not be forced to waste valuable time planning the reductions in staffing and spending they would need to make if the cuts are implemented as scheduled on May 23.
- ***We ask Congress not to include in any COVID-19-related legislation any new programs or requirements that would increase hospitals' regulatory burden.*** In recent days Congress and the administration have appropriately reduced certain regulatory requirements on a temporary basis and it would be counterproductive to offset this much-needed regulatory relief by introducing new regulations and requirements. We ask you and your colleagues to be mindful of this as you craft the next COVID-19 bill.



Before it is over, we expect hundreds of thousands, if not millions of Pennsylvanians, to be affected in one way or another by the COVID-19 threat. Through the steps we have outlined above, you and Congress can make a major difference in our ability to serve our fellow Pennsylvanians as effectively as possible. To this end, we ask you to support the needs outlined above and to convey your support to congressional leaders.

Sincerely,

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SNAP

