

Good Afternoon,

I hope everyone is doing well during these unprecedented times. I wanted to take moment to provide a COVID-19 update to let you know what is happening on the federal level.

CARES Act Update

Over 85 million Americans will receive a direct payment of up to \$1,200 to provide emergency relief and stimulate demand in the economy.

- Even as hospitals deal with thousands of coronavirus patients, the health care economy has suffered as a result of canceled elective surgeries. Recognizing the importance of keeping hospitals on their feet, the Trump Administration has provided significant relief to hospitals. The CARES Act also accelerated the long-overdue tele-health revolution, as millions of Americans consult with doctors from the safety and comfort of their homes.

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

- More than four million loans have been made to small businesses, totaling over \$520 billion in relief funds.

Testing, Research, and PPE

- 7.5 million tests for COVID-19 have been performed in the United States.
- According to The COVID Tracking Project, we are now performing around 250,000 tests per day in the United States—and the number is growing.
- Energy and Commerce Committee reported that “As of May 4, FEMA, HHS, and the private sector combined have coordinated the delivery of or are currently shipping: 66.8 million N95 respirators, 115.4 million surgical masks, seven and a half million face shields, 18.7 million surgical gowns, 946.6 million gloves, 10,663 ventilators, and 8,450 federal medical station beds. Since April 12, 40 flights carrying more than 35 million FEMA-procured masks and respirators from 3M have landed in the U.S. The masks are inventoried at a warehouse and then distributed to prioritized areas as determined by FEMA and HHS. FEMA, HHS, and other federal agencies are distributing cloth face coverings for critical infrastructure workers. As of May 4, over 73.8 million cloth face coverings are being processed and distributed to state, local, tribal, private sector, and federal entities.”
- 72 clinical trials for potential therapies for COVID-19 are underway with FDA oversight.
- According to the Milken Institute, which has a COVID-19 Treatment and Vaccine Tracker, there are over 150 treatments for COVID-19 in preclinical or clinical trials.

Local Funding

- Through the CARES Act, Congress acted to provide support to states and localities through \$150 billion in direct assistance and appropriating \$454 billion to the exchange stabilization fund.
- Treasury and the Fed will use \$35 billion of this money to leverage up to \$500 billion of liquidity for states and localities through the Municipal Liquidity Facility (MLF).
- Similarly, the Money Market Mutual Fund Liquidity Facility (MMLF) supports the municipal bond market, a primary tool for states and locals to raise money for public projects.
- The Main Street Lending Program ensures that states and localities have a tax base to fund their operations by keeping small to mid-size businesses solvent.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Public Health Update

- The CDC said in a member briefing Friday there are 115 meat or poultry processing facilities with COVID-19 cases over 23 states and 4,900 workers or about **3% of the meatpacking and poultry industry workforce** have been diagnosed. Factors potentially affecting risk for infection include difficulties with workplace physical distancing and hygiene and crowded living and transportation conditions.
- FDA authorized **Roche's serology or antibody test** which is reportedly more accurate than other tests already on the market. Roche has automated testing machines installed in more than 100 U.S. labs, meaning the company can make the **antibody tests available** immediately.
- The FDA authorized Gilead's drug remdesivir after preliminary results from an NIH study showed the drug could **shorten recovery time** for coronavirus patients by 31 percent. Gilead said the drug would be available to patients in the US **this week** via a donation to the US Government

CMS Announces Independent Commission to Address Safety and Quality in Nursing Homes

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced a new independent Commission that will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the nursing home response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Commission will provide independent recommendations to the contractor to review and report to CMS to help inform immediate and future responses to COVID-19 in nursing homes.

The Commission will help inform efforts to safeguard the health and quality of life of vulnerable Americans as CMS continues to battle COVID-19 as well as preparing for future threats to resident safety and public health. The Commission will include leading industry experts, family members, clinicians, resident/patient advocates, medical ethicists, administrators, academicians, infection control and prevention professionals, state and local authorities, and other selected experts.

The press release is attached and available at: <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-announces-independent-commission-address-safety-and-quality-nursing-homes>

More information on the Commission is attached and available at: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/coronavirus-commission-safety-and-quality-nursing-homes.pdf>

Grant Opportunities

Just as a reminder - the application period for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security FEMA Fiscal Year 2019 FP&S Grant Program is currently open and will close on Friday, May 29, 2020 at 5 p.m. The purpose of the FP&S Program is to reach high-risk target groups and reduce deaths and injuries caused by fire and fire-related hazards. Funding under FP&S also supports Firefighter Safety as well as Research and Development (R&D) activities. The allocation of FP&S awards is a highly competitive process; awards are determined based on an applicant's ability to both address FP&S program priorities and provide the most compelling justification for their need.

For Fiscal Year 2019, FEMA will provide \$35 million to strengthen community fire prevention programs and enable scientific research on innovations that improve firefighter safety, health and wellness.

FEMA released the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for FY 2019 FP&S on April 21, 2020. The NOFO and technical assistance documents for this program are available at www.grants.gov and on the [FEMA website](#).

Also, there is an **additional \$100 Million Available to Firefighters** through the CARES Act is currently open - The deadline for this application is May 15. AFG-S provides direct financial assistance to eligible fire departments, nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations and state fire training academies. If you haven't done so already, please review the grant information on the [FEMA website](#). The online AFG-S Grant Program application is available through the AFGP [FEMA Grants Outcomes \(GO\) application portal](#).

Education Update

Last week **Congressman Fitzpatrick** sent a letter to United States Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos urging that school districts be granted the flexibility to utilize the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant funding to help fill budget gaps in school district budgets.

In Bucks County, the Morrisville School Board is considering taking extreme steps to make up a \$1.4 million gap in the district's annual budget. More is needed to help districts like Morrisville preserve fiscal solvency while providing students with the quality education they deserve.

The funding appropriated by Congress is simply not enough to help districts like Morrisville stay afloat. We need to give school districts maximum flexibility to access much needed funds, to help them stay on track to best support their students, faculty, and staff.

To read the letter, click [here](#).

Last week, the Congressman sent a letter to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy urging them to support nonprofits in the next round of coronavirus disaster relief. More than 140 Members of Congress and a large group of the nation's leading national nonprofits joined them in the call to action.

To read the letter, click [here](#).

Healthcare Update

Yesterday, Congressman Fitzpatrick sent a letter to United States Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Alex Azar regarding the availability of the clinical drug, Remdesivir, which is manufactured by Gilead Sciences, Inc.

Remdesivir received emergency use authorization from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), following data from a clinical trial indicated that it shortened the recovery time of hospitalized COVID-19 patients. Gilead Services is using the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) and HHS to distribute Remdesivir while the company attempts to increase production. Earlier this week, dozens of hospitals in our area received denial notices regarding their request to obtain and use the clinical drug. Currently, Gilead has about 1.5 million doses on hand waiting to be distributed.

To read the letter, click [here](#).

Census Update

PA01 Response rate: 69.8%

PA Overall Response: 60%

National Response: 57.7%

Please continue to encourage our constituents to complete the 2020 Census questionnaire online, via telephone and paper.

In closing, we are all united in this fight and we are most effective when all levels of our government, federal, state, and local, are working together to help our community. Feel free to continue the open dialog with our office and as always, please call me on my cell if we can be of any assistance: 215-514-0579.