



The National Voice for Direct-Care RNs

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May 4, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

Registered nurses and other health care workers are risking their lives every day to care for patients suffering from COVID-19. The dire conditions under which we are working are unnecessary, and our government has failed to protect us and our patients during this pandemic.

For two months we have been urgently demanding that the Trump Administration and Congress step up to ensure that health care workers get the personal protective equipment (PPE) that they need. We've called on Congress and the Administration to mandate the promulgation of an emergency temporary OSHA standard to protect frontline workers, and the full invocation of the Defense Production Act to urgently increase production of PPE, medical equipment and testing supplies. For two months, both the Trump Administration and Congress have failed to act to protect frontline health care workers.

The CDC has estimated that between 10 percent and 20 percent of all COVID-19 positive patients are health care workers, and scores of these workers have died as a result. These deaths would have been prevented if our government had prioritized the health and safety of health care workers. Instead, our government has treated us as if we are expendable. If we don't protect health care workers, the pandemic will not be controlled, and our country will not be able to return to any degree of normalcy.

We are deeply concerned that you have once again postponed reconvening the House of Representatives. To be clear, as registered nurses, we support the reported caution expressed by the Attending Physician of the United States Congress regarding gatherings of Congress, given the continued risks presented by COVID-19 in the District of Columbia and across the nation. We do not want Members of Congress or their staff members to risk their health or their lives.

At the same time, Congress must move forward with the peoples' business during these difficult days. Congress is in a classic Catch-22: You cannot reconvene the Congress as long as the pandemic poses dire risks to Members and their staffs, but the pandemic will not be

contained unless Congress reconvenes and passes a CARES 2 bill that addresses the needs of the nation. **As such we endorse the proposals put forward by Committee on Rules Chairman Jim McGovern to bring the House back into session temporarily to address the pandemic utilizing proxy voting and remote committee proceedings, while exploring longer term solutions in the face of these challenges.**

We urge you to immediately reconvene the House using the safety precautions proposed by Chairman McGovern. Nurses across the country need legislators to immediately pass a mandate for an emergency temporary OSHA standard and increased production of PPE. The nation cannot afford Congress to be paralyzed by inaction.

Sincerely,



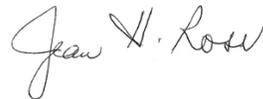
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