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### **Ex Officio Member**

**Marc Boutin, JD**  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Health Council

March 11, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Leader  
United States Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer, Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

## **RE: Potential Aid for Industries Impacted by Coronavirus**

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

I write regarding prospective federal intervention to support the airline, travel, and other targeted industries impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic. **The National Health Council urges you to also include patient advocacy organizations, associations, and other non-profits within any federal aid packages or supplemental appropriations measures**, as many have been and will be harmed by event cancellations, travel restrictions, and decreased giving caused by economic uncertainty as a result of COVID-19. Because of their tax-exempt status, this may necessitate targeted assistance or reshaping tax code-related assistance.

Created by and for patient organizations 100 years ago, the National Health Council (NHC) brings diverse organizations together to forge consensus and drive patient-centered health policy. We promote increased access to affordable, high-value, sustainable health care. Made up of more than 140 national health-related organizations and businesses, the NHC's core membership includes the nation's leading patient

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organizations. Other members include health-related associations and nonprofit organizations including the provider, research, and family caregiver communities; and businesses representing biopharmaceutical, device, diagnostic, generic drug, and payer organizations.

The spring season is a time when many patient advocacy organizations hold important events that drive a significant portion of their revenue, such as walks, bike rides, and galas. As you are no doubt aware, the fast-spreading COVID-19 epidemic has prompted the cancellation of dozens of these types of events as well as other mission-critical scientific and membership conferences. The loss of these meetings and conferences is especially difficult as they play a significant role in advancing science and educating patients and providers. Many others are considering cancelling or postponing innumerable other events dependent on in-person attendance at convention centers, hotels, and other event facilities. They will not only lose important revenue that will help them support people with chronic conditions that are most vulnerable to serious cases of COVID-19, but they will forfeit significant non-refundable expenses already promised to hotels, conference centers, and vendors.

We are also concerned by potential impacts on individual and corporate giving in a time when health-related organizations are most needed. Congress should ensure communities are able to support their local nonprofits during this crisis by enacting a **targeted, temporary giving incentive** that enables all residents, regardless of whether they claim itemize deductions, to receive a tax incentive for giving to the work of charitable nonprofits responding to, or suffering from, the coronavirus.

Additionally, many patient advocacy organizations operate similarly to small businesses and are greatly impacted if employees are forced to take sick leave or are quarantined as a result of COVID-19 interaction. We are aware the Trump Administration and Congress are considering measures for small businesses and impacted industries that may require cash flow assistance amid the outbreak, and **urge that tax-exempt entities be included in any temporary aid designed to stem the economic fallout resulting from COVID-19**. If Congress does intend to focus relief or stimulus legislation on tax relief, it must expressly apply to employment at tax-exempt organizations by making tax credits and deductions applicable to the taxes non-profits do pay.

The nation's leading patient advocacy organizations stand ready and able to assist Congress and the administration in combating the COVID-19 outbreak in addition to meeting our mission to serve people with complex health conditions but need to be sure that they can be financial stable through the upcoming financial uncertainties.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MBoutin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Marc Boutin, JD  
Chief Executive Officer

CC:

The Honorable Richard Neal, Chairman  
United States House of Representatives Committee on Ways & Means  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady, Ranking Member  
United States House of Representatives Committee on Ways & Means  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley, Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on Finance  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ron Wyden, Ranking Member  
United States Senate Committee on Finance  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chairwoman  
United States House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations  
H-307 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member  
United States House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations  
H-307 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chair  
United States Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-128 the Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Vice Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-128 the Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510