

May 8, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable Mitch McConnell
The Honorable Chuck Schumer
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy

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

On behalf of the American Seniors Housing Association (ASHA) and Argentum, we implore you to prioritize the senior living industry (assisted living, independent living, memory care and continuing care retirement communities) for COVID-19 relief as you consider the next federal stimulus legislation. Our operators and their employees, including caregivers, nurses, housekeeping, dining staff, and others have been on the front lines of this pandemic since Day 1 with one goal; to keep the residents under their watch safe from the harm of this invisible disease. It has not been easy and is not without risk, but they continue to work tirelessly and compassionately to provide care and comfort to almost 1.9 million residents who call senior living” home”.

Sadly, our call for PPE, test kits and financial relief to date have gone unanswered. We are caring for the most vulnerable population, yet we are ignored because we are not hospitals or nursing homes. And now as businesses prepare to reopen, competition for PPE and test kits will only increase.

Our legislative priorities are clear and simple. Specifically, we urge you to build on the existing capacities created under the CARES Act and apply them to senior living:

- 1) Priority access to PPE and Testing for senior living staff and residents
- 2) Expand the HHS Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund to include funding dedicated to Senior Living with an allocation of \$20 billion. This program is critical to the future financial health of the senior living industry. To date, our industry has not received any allocation of funds.
- 3) Expand and amend the Small Business Administration (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to permit participation by senior living companies by allowing an employee count per location.
- 4) Include Senior Living workforce in Hero Pay measures

We are reaching a critical stage in the battle against COVID-19 and the industry is experiencing significant operational and financial stress. The costs associated with COVID-19 planning, prevention and response cannot be overstated and given the significance of our work, our industry should not be left behind but rather prioritized for all relief programs established by Congress in the next emergency bill.

Our industry estimates a financial need of \$45-57 billion over the next 12 months as a result of this pandemic, largely due to enhanced infection control measures and supplies, additional staffing and incentives, and loss of revenue associated with halting new residents moving into the communities. Small and large, urban and rural providers are all being impacted by the financial stress.

Please support these expanded programs so that senior living communities and their operators can continue their efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, keep our seniors safe and engaged and remain a viable option for the foreseeable future.

Sincerely,



David Schless
President
American Seniors Housing Association



James Balda
President & CEO
Argentum