

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

March 25, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write as the Maryland Congressional Delegation in strong support of the March 24, 2020 request for an expedited major Disaster Declaration for the State of Maryland as a result of the impacts of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). We agree that the federal government must immediately bring the full weight of its resources to bear under the Stafford Act to protect Marylanders during this public health crisis.

Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency on January 31, 2020, and you declared a National Emergency on March 13, 2020.

Governor Hogan has certified that he has taken appropriate response actions under Maryland State law and directed execution of the State of Maryland's Consequence Management Operations Plan, pursuant to the Stafford Act. He further declared a State of Emergency on March 5, 2020, activated the State Emergency Operations Center and Maryland National Guard, issued numerous executive orders, and directed all state agencies to respond to and mitigate the threat posed by COVID-19.

The Maryland General Assembly provided and authorized the use of additional funds, and state and local governments have closely coordinated with each other and surrounding jurisdictions in regards to ongoing response and recovery operations.

In particular, we request the authorization of Stafford Act assistance under the Individual Assistance Program, including the Disaster Unemployment Assistance program; the Crisis Counseling and Assistance and Training program; and the Other Needs Assistance program under the Individuals and Households Program to fill gaps in disaster-related child care, medical, dental, and funeral expenses. Additionally, we support federal Public Assistance, Category A, Debris Removal, as well as federal Public Assistance Category B, Emergency Protective Measures.

Maryland is already facing severe shortages of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as respirators, gowns, gloves, and masks, and PPE and sanitizing products remain highly requested and are difficult to provide due to continuing shortages. An increasing number of Maryland counties are requesting more infectious disease personnel such as nurses and other practitioners, along with more ventilators, monitoring equipment, hospital beds, testing kits, and tents. At the same time, personnel resources are being exhausted, due in part to burnout, illness, and quarantine.

We agree with Governor Hogan that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response and recovery is beyond the capabilities of the state and the affected local governments, and that supplementary federal assistance is required.

Maryland continues to play a unique and critical role in the continuity of government of the United States as part of the National Capitol Region (NCR), given the many federal employees who work, live, and commute at federal agencies and facilities in Maryland and surrounding jurisdictions. Federal assistance in this case would help preserve the continuity of government by protecting the health of all Marylanders, including those who are putting their lives on the line every day working to combat COVID-19 and safeguard the well-being of all Americans.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request. We request an immediate response.

Sincerely,

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

/s/ Steny H. Hoyer  
Member of Congress

/s/ C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
Member of Congress

/s/ John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress

/s/ Andy Harris, M.D.  
Member of Congress

/s/ Anthony G. Brown  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

/s/ David Trone  
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Chad Wolf, Acting Secretary of Homeland Security

The Honorable Peter T. Gaynor, Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency

The Honorable MaryAnn E. Tierney, Regional Administrator for FEMA Region III