

March 18, 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 in support of the March 15, 2020 request by District of Columbia Mayor Bowser, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, and Virginia Governor Ralph Northam to add the National Capital Region to the priority locations for federally-supported COVID-19 testing sites.

As noted in the letter, the National Capital Region is home to over six million residents and the seat of the federal government, with hundreds of thousands of military and civilian employees serving the Departments of Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Defense, and other mission critical agencies. The health and safety of this region – which includes employees who commute, work, and live in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia – must remain a top priority for continuity of operations for our democratic government in carrying out critical functions of the federal government for the entire United States.

When standing up the Department of Homeland Security, Congress specifically established the Office of National Capital Region Coordination (ONCRC) in response to the unique coordination challenges facing the National Capital Region (NCR) due to the region's large federal presence, including all three branches of government; the intersection of Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia; and a number of other unique complexities. The ONCRC closely coordinates with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG). The region is already working closely together on the COVID-19 response, including coordinating with HHS and FEMA regional leadership.

We are pleased that our jurisdiction's health departments and state emergency management agencies continue to work together across borders to identify proposed drive-through testing sites that we would stand up with federal support. Therefore, the region is well-positioned to make the best possible use of federal support for this testing, and each of our jurisdictions have pledged to commit to host a drive-through testing site.

Thank you for considering this urgent request. We request an immediate response.

Sincerely,

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

/s/ Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

/s/ Tim Kaine
United States Senator

/s/ Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

/s/ Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress

/s/ John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress

/s/ Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

/s/ Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

/s/ David Trone
Member of Congress

/s/ Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

/s/ Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/ Jennifer Wexton
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Mike Pence, Vice President of the United States
The Honorable Deborah Birx, MD, Ambassador of the United States
The Honorable Alex Azar, Secretary of Health and Human Services
The Honorable Mark Esper, Secretary of Defense
The Honorable Chad Wolf, Acting Secretary of Homeland Security
MaryAnn E. Tierney, Regional Administrator for FEMA Region III