



April 2, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Senate Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and House Minority Leader McCarthy:

We are writing on behalf of the American Seniors Housing Association (ASHA) and Argentum, regarding prioritization of senior living in the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund (PHSSE), the grant program included in the CARES Act. Please see our attached letter to Secretary Azar seeking an allocation of those funds to help defray some of the significant costs associated with combatting COVID-19 in senior living.

Our senior living providers employ 900,000 workers and care for almost 2 million seniors including America's veterans and their spouses, living in independent living, assisted living, memory care, and continuing care retirement communities. The senior living industry is on the front lines of this pandemic and is committed to continuing to do whatever it takes to prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, the sobering fact is that senior living is caring for the population's most vulnerable to being infected, making the work all that more important. The industry is standing solidly behind our seniors, but we are working under stressful conditions and in great need of testing kits and PPE. We continue to stress to policymakers the need to prioritize senior living as these resources become available.

With your help we can and will continue to protect America's seniors. Senior living providers are not nursing homes, and not supported by government funding, yet they are part of the health care system currently tasked with the responsibility for containing the COVID-19 pandemic and if successful, can unburden these higher care services. In doing this, they are facing similar and immediate financial pressures that should be addressed in the same serious manner.

Our estimated increased costs and lost revenue over the next 12 months could reach a staggering \$40 – \$57 billion. Costs for infection control, dietary, and PPE expenses have quadrupled. In the abundance of caution, new admissions have been halted. Labor costs have increased as more staff are needed to care for frail seniors during this challenging time. All

communities are working to prevent the spread of the disease, but once a resident tests positive for COVID-19, the costs exponentially increase.

We ask for your support in urging Secretary Azar to prioritize \$20 billion of the Emergency Fund for senior living. As our attached letter to the Secretary states, senior living is working hard to be part of the solution and relieve the more critical health care system by doing what we can to keep our residents safe and free from infection. However, the costs cannot be overstated. Further we need to weather this storm so we can be home to the 74 million baby boomers who will soon need senior living.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Respectfully,



James Balda
President & CEO
Argentum



David Schless
President
American Seniors Housing Association

Cc:

Sen. Charles Grassley, Chair, Finance Committee
Sen. Ron Wyden, Ranking Member, Finance Committee
Rep. Frank Pallone, Chair, Energy & Commerce Committee
Rep. Greg Walden, Ranking Member, Energy & Commerce Committee
Rep. Richard Neal, Chair, Ways & Means Committee
Rep. Kevin Brady, Ranking Member, Ways and Means Committee
Sen. Richard Shelby, Chair, Appropriations
Sen. Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, Appropriations