



March 4, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education, and Related Agencies
United States Senate

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS, Education and Related Agencies
United States Senate

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Senate and House Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee Leaders:

I am writing on behalf of the American Seniors Housing Association (ASHA) to thank you for your leadership to address the needs of our country and strongly urge you to take a comprehensive approach as you consider additional funding and investments to meet the needs of seniors and senior communities that are impacted by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

ASHA is a national organization of over 550 companies involved in the operation, development, investment, and financing of the entire spectrum of seniors housing – independent living, assisted living, memory care, and Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs). The residents of our communities tend to be more vulnerable to communicable diseases given their age and health status. The average resident living in an Assisted Living Community is a woman in her 80s and requires assistance with three or more activities of daily living (ADLs) and/or suffers from Alzheimer’s disease or related dementia. Living in a community setting with other seniors who share meals and participate in group activities places them at great risk of contagion if the COVID-19 virus is introduced into the community. Our members are on the front lines of the rapidly evolving outbreak and expediting sound preparation and response plans to protect their residents and staff. ASHA continues to track and communicate

information about the coronavirus in an effort to provide timely information and helpful strategies for our members and their senior residents for how to prepare and respond.

As Congress considers the nation's immediate and long-term needs to address the coronavirus situation, we request that you prioritize services and treatment of individuals in seniors housing (including independent living, assisted living, nursing home, and continuing care retirement communities) in these efforts. Specifically, supplemental funding efforts as well as the forthcoming fiscal year 2021 appropriations bills should prioritize programs and supplies such as N-95 masks and test kits aimed at prevention, identification and treatment services for seniors housing residents and operators. Further, we call on Congress to include language that directs federal, state and local public health and preparedness agencies to address the full spectrum of senior living communities in their outreach and education initiatives pertaining to coronavirus.

ASHA is committed to being a resource to Congress to help address and mitigate the urgent needs of seniors and our members who serve them. Thank you for your consideration of these important issues. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to Jeanne McGlynn Delgado at 202-885-5561 or jeanne@seniorshousing.org with questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David A. Schless".

David Schless
President
American Seniors Housing Association