

ROBERT E. LATTA
5TH DISTRICT, OHIO

DEPUTY WHIP

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY
REPUBLICAN LEADER

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER
PROTECTION AND COMMERCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3505

June 15, 2020

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2467 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
(202) 225-6405

DISTRICT OFFICES:
1045 NORTH MAIN STREET
SUITE 6
BOWLING GREEN, OH 43402
(419) 354-8700

101 CLINTON STREET
SUITE 1200
DEFIANCE, OH 43512
(419) 782-1996

318 DORNEY PLAZA
ROOM 302
FINDLAY, OH 45840
(419) 422-7791

The Honorable Alex Azar
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

I am reaching out on behalf of hospitals in Northwest and West Central Ohio that have experienced significant financial loss due to the COVID-19 crisis and request additional assistance to maintain operations.

I appreciate the swift response and action of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to ensure the safety and well-being of all Americans and front-line health care workers. As you know, Congress passed the CARES Act in which \$175 billion was appropriated to reimburse health care providers for lost revenues and resources to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. In preparing for a surge in COVID-19 cases, hospitals were directed to delay elective surgeries to lower infection rate and to also be adequately prepared with personal protective equipment (PPE).

However, although with good intention, this has had negative consequences on hospitals in my district. During this shutdown, revenues for some hospitals declined by up to 50% while operating costs continued to stay level as staff stayed on the payroll in anticipation of a wave of COVID-19 patients.

I applaud HHS for their assistance with the Medicare reimbursement rate for hospitals that have been hit significantly with COVID-19 patients. While this is good for hospitals in areas with high infection rates, many hospitals in my district continue to be at a disadvantage due a low population of COVID-19 patients. It is fortunate that there were limited amounts of cases of infection; however, the cost of preparation and cancelation of elective procedures hit these hospitals just the same.

Distribution of CARES funding is more important now than ever. I am concerned that because hospitals have endured a large revenue shortfall, this will negatively impact local communities economies, workforce, and health care access.

I, therefore, am requesting that you provide a layout of how funding will be distributed to hospitals so they can operate with greater financial certainty and continue to deliver care for those in need while being adequately prepared for any potential rise in COVID-19 cases.

I look forward to working with you and ensuring that Ohio providers and hospitals have the necessary resources to continue to provide top-quality health care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert E. Latta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and a distinct 'L'.

Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress