



October 15, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

On behalf of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and the Association of Immunization Managers (AIM) we are writing to request at least **\$8.4 billion for COVID-19 vaccination distribution plus an additional \$500 million for seasonal influenza operations in the next emergency supplemental funding package**. These funds are urgently needed to expand and strengthen federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal capacity for a timely, comprehensive, and equitable vaccine distribution campaign. It is important to note this funding request is updated from our estimate provided earlier this summer to reflect emerging information from the vaccine clinical trials, current public health agency priorities, and the need to bolster public confidence in a COVID-19 vaccination campaign.

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provided \$200 million to jurisdictions for preparedness for a COVID-19 vaccine, including the development of distribution and administration plans for a safe and effective vaccine. While our organizations appreciate this funding, it is merely a down payment, and it is too early to predict the additional cost burden and supplemental needs of a COVID-19 vaccination distribution of this magnitude. Based on our collective experience with H1N1, we firmly believe that our emergency supplemental funding request represents our best estimate at this time, but it might be altered further as vaccines are approved by the Food and Drug Administration and distributed nationwide next year.

Specifically, \$8.4 billion for COVID-19 vaccination distribution plus \$500 million for seasonal influenza campaign operations would support the following:

- \$3 billion for workforce recruitment and training for state and local health departments.
- \$1 billion for state and local vaccination infrastructure improvements.
- \$500 million for Immunization Information Systems (IIS) data modernization.
- \$700 million for reporting on vaccine coverage, effectiveness, safety, and evaluation.
- \$1.2 billion for cold supply chain management which includes transportation, storage, equipment, and training for staff.
- \$500 million for Emergency Use Authorization regulation and oversight.
- \$500 million for outreach to priority populations, communications, and educational efforts to increase vaccine confidence and combat misinformation.



- \$1 billion for standing up additional vaccination sites.

Further, we recommend that Congress appropriate any emergency supplemental funding for vaccine distribution directly to CDC so that the agency can rapidly allocate resources to existing public health systems they work with daily. We oppose any efforts for Congress to create new formulas or approaches for disbursing emergency supplemental funds at this juncture. In these unprecedented times, state and territorial health departments will rely upon existing funding mechanisms to stand up a herculean effort for a rapid, safe, and effective nationwide vaccination program. Vaccination campaigns are a monumental public health accomplishment built on decades of expertise and we must work together to ensure the COVID-19 vaccination campaign builds upon that legacy.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this emergency supplemental request. We look forward to continuing our work with Congress to address this devastating pandemic. For additional information, please contact Carolyn McCoy, ASTHO's senior director of government affairs, at cmccoy@astho.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Fraser".

Michael Fraser, PhD, MS, CAE, FCPP
Chief Executive Officer
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Claire Hannan".

Claire Hannan, MPH
Executive Director
Association of Immunization Managers