

April 23, 2020

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing on behalf of the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) to recognize your leadership in crafting the *Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act*. This will provide critical financial resources to states and the federal government to move quickly to improve our diagnostic laboratory testing capacity. We are grateful that you provided the nation with a foundation for a national diagnostic testing strategy to serve patients and the public in each of our nation's states and territories.

As you know, laboratory testing is critical to diagnosing, staging, and monitoring patients who have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2. It is also fundamental to provide testing to anyone in our nation who feels they are at-risk for COVID-19 and for the surveillance efforts (screening) to track the spread of this virus and determine how to allocate scarce medical resources. Laboratory testing *is* the linchpin to dealing effectively and swiftly with this public health challenge. Thank you sincerely for the financial resources to help states implement this opportunity for laboratories and health systems to serve our citizenry. It will help us achieve your vision to reopen our great country.

In order for this plan to succeed we desperately need enhanced coordination between federal and state governments and clinical laboratories. Personal protective equipment, supply chain distribution of scarce testing resources and support for growing the laboratory workforce will help us defeat this virus. To assist your Administration with these and other issues related to laboratory testing, ASCP urges that you create a *national pandemic testing task force* to be assembled at the federal level as soon as possible. This task force should include expertise from laboratory medicine, policymakers at the state and federal level and logistics specialists who will ensure that there is a plan for the distribution of resources.

ASCP strongly supports the funding that the new Act provides for the training and development of the laboratory workforce. We hope this funding will be used to provide our workforce with training program support, loan forgiveness, hazard pay, and other support, to offset the shortage of our professionals and the extreme working conditions that the pathology and laboratory workforce are currently encountering. It is imperative we have a readily available workforce in place to promptly process the increased testing demands for COVID-19 as well as the onslaught of tests related to the resumption of elective medical procedures and services. These recommendations have been developed to support your efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, and are outlined in the attached [document](#).

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The ASCP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit medical specialty society representing over 100,000 members. Our members are board certified pathologists (including medical examiners), other physicians, clinical scientists (PhDs), certified medical laboratory scientists/technologists and technicians, and educators. ASCP is one of the nation's largest medical specialty societies and is the world's largest organization representing the field of laboratory medicine and pathology. As the leading provider of continuing education for pathologists and medical laboratory personnel, ASCP enhances the quality of the profession through comprehensive educational programs, publications, and self-assessment materials.

ASCP looks forward to continuing our work with your Administration to help our nation's laboratories get America back to work again. If we can be of assistance please contact me at President@ASCP.org or 312.541.4951.

Sincerely,



Gene P. Siegal, MD, PhD, FASCP
President, American Society for Clinical Pathology

cc: Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer
House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy