

February 6, 2020

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

As mayors of the cities most affected by the January 31<sup>st</sup> novel coronavirus federal announcements regarding airport screening, monitoring, and quarantine of travelers, we write to express our continued concerns, encourage enhanced coordination among federal agencies, and request a written commitment to provide federal resources to support our local responses.

We recognize that this is a rapidly evolving situation and that new information about the virus' spread requires urgent and frequent reevaluation of decisions at the federal level. We also appreciate that agencies at all levels of government are devoting their best people and resources to this response.

Our jurisdictions have been devoting significant resources to this response from the start. We are all in this together and we stand ready to ramp up our response to support public health and safety.

To strengthen our collaboration, we are writing to request:

- 1. Clear written assurances that federal funding will be made available to cover and reimburse local response activities.** We need better guarantees, in writing, that emergency federal resources will be made available to cover the extraordinary costs we are already incurring, and which will increase dramatically with the recent announcements of the new federal posture. We also need details on how those resources will be allocated and distributed. We appreciate the Department of Health and Human Services' signal that they may need to transfer funding for response purposes, we believe this is insufficient. Specifically, we look to partner with you and with Congress to provide emergency funding to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus domestically and internationally, including treatment and related costs of carrying out the quarantine directive.
- 2. Improved federal coordination, alignment of communication and clear signals that federal decisions are being made based on public health expertise and the best available science.** To ensure public confidence, major federal decisions around novel pathogens must be driven by public health experts and framed using public health evidence, with enough pre-planning to allow both clear, consistent messaging and *written* communication of plans and guidance. As we have individually and collectively expressed, inconsistent and contradictory communications and directives within the same federal partners, as well as among federal

partners has made responding extremely difficult. The federal government must act with one voice.

- 3. More clarity on federal, state, and local roles and responsibilities.** We all recognize the need to work in partnership at all levels of government, but we need additional details in writing in the form of a cogent, clear federal operations plan, which defines the expectations for local government support.
- 4. Appropriate federal responsibility for federal decisions.** As many jurisdictions lack capacity at a local level to practically implement a quarantine, our hope is that, if requested by the jurisdiction, federal orders are used to carry out this federal decision, and federal resources then be used to quarantine individuals. Further, federal agencies responsible for quarantine, including the Department of Defense (DOD) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), must be capable and willing to support the needs of all related quarantine cases -- including those deemed "high risk."
- 5. More collaboration with state and local jurisdictions allowing for flexibility on logistics of implementing federal decisions.** It is critical that the federal government collaborate with local and state jurisdictions and support our resource requests for implementation. Most logistical decisions should be left to the implementing jurisdictions, particularly where scientific evidence is lacking and federal resources are not immediately available.
- 6. Approval of and resources for remote Customs and Border Protection inspection and processing facilities.** By allowing for remote Customs and Border Protection inspection and processing facilities, airports can facilitate enhanced screening and maintain normal FIS operations, while treating arriving passengers with dignity and respect.

We worry about diverting health care resources at the height of influenza season, when our hospitals are already at peak capacity. We are concerned about our public health system's capacity to implement these measures, recognizing they may inadvertently distract us from our ongoing tried-and-true efforts to isolate confirmed cases and closely monitor their contacts. We also worry about the potential to again overwhelm laboratory capacity, recognizing that national capacity has not been adequate to quickly test our highest-risk individuals.

We know that our federal partners share these concerns and trust that these federal decisions are being driven by the best public health science.

We are all in this together. Let's coordinate better so that we can inspire confidence in those we serve. We look forward to your response so that we can all be better prepared to respond to this and future emergencies.

Sincerely,

**Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot**  
City of Chicago

**Mayor Michael Duggan**  
City of Detroit

**Mayor Eric Garcetti**  
City of Los Angeles

**Mayor Bill de Blasio**  
City of New York

**Mayor London Breed**  
City of San Francisco

**Mayor Jenny Durkan**  
City of Seattle