



The National Voice for Direct-Care RNs

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Dear Member of Congress,

National Nurses United (NNU), representing more than 175,000 registered nurses across the country, is the largest union and professional association of nurses in the nation. As we write to you today, approximately 360 Americans are still dying every day from Covid-19. According to the CDC, daily new cases are about 55,000-- likely a massive undercount due to the widespread nature of at-home testing the results of which often go unreported. Nurses and other health care workers across the country are bracing for the potential of high rates of illness and death this winter once again in our nation's hospitals, and it's essential our nation's pandemic response does not backslide. Concurrently, we are concerned about the impacts of the Monkeypox Virus (MPV) in our communities, with almost 25,000 cases of MPV reported in the United States so far. **To ensure that our public health system can continue to address both public health emergencies, NNU supports the president's supplemental funding request for \$22.4 billion for the Covid-19 pandemic response, and \$4.6B for the MPV response. We urge Congress to include this supplemental funding in the forthcoming continuing resolution.**

Our members have been the frontline of the response to the Covid pandemic for more than two years, and we are deeply concerned about the lack of financial resources available to ensure the continuation of critical public health programs as the virus continues to circulate both at home and abroad. We were glad to see the \$18.4 billion request to help the Department of Health and Human Services respond to the virus and its variants, which would help support procurement of Covid-19 vaccines, including those effective against future variants, and Covid-19 treatments including monoclonal antibodies and pre-exposure prophylaxis. Additionally, we were heartened to see the inclusion of funds to help replenish personal protective equipment for the Strategic National Stockpile as well as improved access to treatment for people with long Covid.

In order to protect the health and safety of our communities, it is critical that Covid-19 vaccinations, testing, and treatment continue to be provided free at the point of service for all patients. The president's funding request includes \$2 billion to continue and sustain critical testing programs, including free community testing at pharmacies and the capacity to distribute free tests, as well as funding to cover the cost of administration of vaccinations for the uninsured and underinsured. The medical countermeasures and supplies provided by this funding request will help prevent, diagnose, and treat Covid-19 and mitigate the effects of future variants, both domestically and abroad.

Ultimately, to protect against future variants and eventually end this pandemic, vaccines and treatments must be made available globally. Nurses have known since the beginning of the vaccine roll-out that unless we vaccinate the global population, we will not be able to control

the pandemic here in the U.S. Unfortunately, there are still billions of people who have not received a single vaccine dose, with a large percentage of those people living in low- and middle-income countries. While we were heartened to see the \$4 billion in funding to the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support vaccination efforts, therapeutics, diagnostics, and preparedness and response capacity internationally, we estimate that adequately scaling up global vaccination efforts will require further funding.

Additionally, nurses support the White House's funding request to bolster the response to fight monkeypox including vaccines, testing, and treatment. As we learned from Covid-19, early efforts to stop the viral spread are critical to a robust public health response that protects as many vulnerable people as possible. We were especially glad to see the inclusion of funding to help fight the spread of the virus globally, as well as money to help prepare for any future virus outbreaks. As nurses, we know that the importance of preparedness in combating future pandemics cannot be overstated.

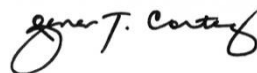
As nurses continue to battle the Covid-19 pandemic on the frontlines, we need Congress to continue to help us protect our patients, our communities, and ourselves. Nurses know that we will never emerge from this pandemic unless the world quickly acts to drastically increase access to vaccines, diagnostics, and treatments for Covid-19, in combination with effective isolation and quarantine measures, workplace protections for nurses and all frontline workers, and other measures. If we do not do this, the illness, death, and suffering caused by this pandemic will continue, and we may see the development of even more dangerous variants, both at home and abroad. **We urge your support of the inclusion of Covid and Monkeypox funding in any imminent government funding package.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,



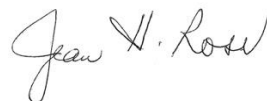
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