

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2020

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

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

The Honorable A. Mitchell McConnell, Jr.
Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

As you continue to negotiate further stimulus packages during this pandemic, we ask that you keep our servicemembers and their families in mind and ensure that testing and treatment options are readily available on bases.

COVID-19 is an unprecedented challenge to Americans health, safety, and everyday way of life. It is imperative that we in government do what we can to ensure that change is both possible and practical. For our military families that live on base, responding to COVID-19 means restricting movements on and around military installations. Military families must have access to the necessary testing and treatment to recover from and prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

We are heartened to see that all branches of the U.S. military have taken this pandemic seriously by cancelling many of their major activities and trainings as well as instituting a ban on non-essential travel for military personnel in the United States and abroad. Department of Defense Secretary Mark Esper has also committed to making 5 million respirator masks, 2,000 ventilators, and as many as 16 military labs available to meet the demand that an aggressive and effective COVID-19 response requires. From the postponement of multinational military exercises to barring family attendance at boot camp and basic training graduations, our servicemembers are making necessary sacrifices to bolster our nation's pandemic response. We must, in turn, guarantee that they the resources and tools they need.

To date, over four dozen military-related cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed among active-duty personnel, DoD civilians, and dependents. However, as Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul Friedrichs, the Joint Staff surgeon at the Pentagon has stated, "the small number of cases of coronavirus,

formally known as COVID-19, reported thus far within the military is probably not a good indicator of the actual presence of the virus in the ranks.”¹ This virus spreads quickly and until we equip our medical professionals with the necessary tools, it spreads unencumbered.

We ask that you keep these considerations in mind and put significant resources towards military base medical facilities so that they can adequately handle this crisis.

Sincerely,

Kendra S. Horn
Member of Congress

Andy Kim
Member of Congress

Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

Donald Norcross
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

Elaine Luria
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

¹ Rachel S. Cohen, DoD Shifting to Domestic Coronavirus Response as Cases Rise, Air Force Magazine (March 18, 2020) <https://www.airforcemag.com/dod-shifting-to-domestic-coronavirus-response-as-cases-rise/>