

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 26, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write in strong support of the March 25, 2020 request by Colorado Governor Jared Polis for an expedited major Disaster Declaration for the State of Colorado as a result of the impacts of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak. We agree with Governor Polis that the federal government must immediately bring the full weight of its resources to bear under the Stafford Act to protect Coloradans during this public health crisis.

As you are aware, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency on January 31, 2020. On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic and you declared a national emergency shortly after on March 13, 2020.

Governor Polis has certified that he has taken appropriate response steps, pursuant to the Stafford Act, through numerous Executive Orders and actions. As examples, the Colorado State Emergency Operations Center was activated on March 2, 2020 to establish, maintain, and share situational awareness. Governor Polis signed an Executive Order on March 11, 2020 proclaiming that a State of Emergency exists for all counties and directed that the Colorado State Emergency Operations Plan be implemented. Governor Polis also ordered into active state service the National Guard, and the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is currently supporting state agencies, local jurisdictions and tribal governments through the State Emergency Operations Center.

The Colorado General Assembly and county and local governments continue to closely coordinate with each other and Governor Polis's Administration in regard to ongoing response and recovery operations.

We request the authorization of all Stafford Act disaster assistance requested by Governor Polis, including Public Assistance Categories A through G, and all Individual Assistance Programs for Colorado's 64 counties and federally recognized tribal nations including: Individuals and Households Program, Mass Care and Emergency Assistance, Crisis Counseling Program, Disaster Case Management, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Disaster Legal Services, the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Transitional Sheltering Assistance, as well as requesting Hazard Mitigation statewide and any other Stafford Act disaster assistance programs deemed appropriate. Given the magnitude of this outbreak and the impending

ramifications, we echo Governor Polis's request for Federal assistance at 100 percent funding to alleviate the impacts caused by this global pandemic.

Colorado is already facing severe shortages of Personal Protective Equipment ("PPE") such as respirators, gowns, gloves, and masks. PPE and sanitizing products remain highly requested and are difficult to provide due to continuing shortages. A recent set of supplies issued from the Strategic National Stockpile fulfilled just one day of PPE need in our state.

Additional epidemiological investigative resources, public health laboratory capacity, surveillance tools, medical equipment, and associated health and medical personnel will be required to meet the growing need of our state.

We agree with Governor Polis that this outbreak is of such severity and magnitude that effective response and recovery is beyond the capabilities of the State, Tribal governments, and affected local governments alone, and that supplementary federal assistance is required.

As of the evening of March 25, 2020, there are 1086 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the State of Colorado, including 19 fatalities. When compared to other states, Colorado has one of the highest rates of COVID-19 cases per capita. These numbers are anticipated to grow exponentially as the disease spreads rapidly in the coming weeks, with Colorado epidemiologists anticipating the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 to grow into the thousands based on predictive modeling.

For the sake of our state's health and economic security, we urge your strong consideration and expedited approval of this request.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress



Scott R. Tipton
Member of Congress