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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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Peter T. Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20472

Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Ave.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Administrator Gaynor & Secretary Azar,

I write today to urge you to send additional resources to Wisconsin given the alarming rise in COVID-19 cases over the last week. Given the lack of a national plan to combat the spread of COVID-19 and persistent nationwide shortages of testing supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE), it is critical that the Administration steps in to send additional support the state of Wisconsin and local governments in their efforts to keep communities safe and prevent the spread of the virus.

On Sunday, September 13, Wisconsin set a single-day new case record with 1,582 new infections reported and a test positivity rate of 20.5%. Wisconsin cities represent 7 of the 20 metro areas in the United States where rates of COVID-19 are growing the fastest, including three cities in my district—La Crosse, Platteville, and Eau Claire. La Crosse is seeing the second fastest rise in COVID-19 cases in the country. Between September 10 and September 12, La Crosse County reported 255 new infections, reaching new case records each day. These trends could quickly result in exponential growth across the state without additional resources.

Last week several universities across the state of Wisconsin returned to in-person classes. Without sufficient guidance from the U.S. Department of Education on how to operate safely, COVID-19 cases have since increased substantially. The University of Wisconsin-Madison suspended in-person learning after over 1,000 students and staff tested positive for the virus. The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse also issued a shelter-in-place order and suspended in-person undergraduate classes after a growing number of students tested positive for the virus. While additional resources are needed throughout the state, it is crucial that we ensure counties and cities with universities have the PPE, testing supplies, and other resources they need to combat the spread of the virus and protect the surrounding community.

Unfortunately, since the Wisconsin Supreme Court struck down Governor Evers' Safer at Home order in May, we have seen a continued steady rise in cases and have yet to bend the transmission curve. Without nationwide guidance on masking wearing and social distancing, local county and city officials are forced to make these determinations by themselves. This lack of leadership from the federal government is proving costly here in Wisconsin.

I once again urge you to provide additional resources to the Wisconsin and local governments in order to prevent a severe increase in cases across the state. I appreciate your attention to this matter and request a response within five business days.

Sincerely,



Ron Kind
Member of Congress

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