

April 6, 2020

Phil Mendelson
Chair, Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20004

CC: All members of the Council

Dear Chair Mendelson:

We the undersigned organizations represent the majority of the physicians practicing in the District of Columbia. We come together today to ask the Council to approve the creation of a short-term loan or grant program to support District physicians during this public health emergency.

Physicians are an important part of the local economy. According to American Medical Association research, physicians contribute \$301.3 million to the District in local taxes and each DC physician supports on average 7.59 jobs.

However, the public health crisis is impacting physician offices similar to how it is impacting local businesses. Even with the expansion of telemedicine, physician offices face major financial issues. We are concerned about the short-term impact but also the long-term impact of physicians' offices being unable to remain open. The aftermath of the public health emergency will see District residents continuing to need medical care but may see a lack of physician offices to handle the need.

We urge you to include a COVID-19 grant or loan fund in your second emergency supplemental that would allow physician practices to apply for grants and short-term loans to stay in operation until the public health emergency passes. Without such loan programs, residents of the District may be unable to see their community physicians, and the District health care system will be unable to meet the needs of its citizens.

Sincerely,

The Medical Society of the District of Columbia
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists – District of Columbia Section
American College of Physicians, District of Columbia Chapter
D.C. Academy of Family Physicians
D.C. Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Medico-Chirurgical Society of the District of Columbia (MedChi DC)
National Hispanic Medical Association
Washington DC Dermatological Society