

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 27, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

Thank you for your work during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure timely reimbursement to providers who have been key to our frontline response in the Los Angeles region. On behalf of the Los Angeles Congressional Delegation, we write regarding the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) COVID-19 expense reimbursement process. We are concerned that across the ten FEMA regions, Region IX has the lowest proportion of current project costs for which the federal share has been obligated, according to OpenFEMA's Public Assistance data. We encourage FEMA Region IX to continue the processing and payment of outstanding claims for eligible expenses submitted by hospitals and healthcare providers in the Los Angeles region.

Throughout the pandemic, Los Angeles' hospitals have played a vital role in caring for COVID-19 patients as well as preventing transmission of COVID-19 while continuing to provide health care services to all who need them. Our healthcare systems have incurred considerable costs to expand capacity, purchase necessary equipment, secure stocks of personal protective equipment, and hire additional clinical staff to ensure high quality care for their communities. At the time, hospitals were assured that FEMA funds would be made available quickly to cover these costs.

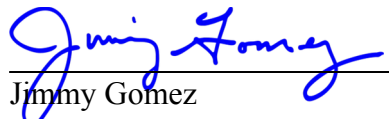
Currently, data from OpenFEMA shows at least 26 healthcare systems in Los Angeles County with \$462 million in total project costs compared to \$88 million in federal share obligated, including 15 systems with no federal share obligated. This delay in processing and payment is occurring while hospitals continue to incur significant COVID-19 related costs. The COVID-19 pandemic has had unprecedented financial impact on hospitals' operating margins and financial forecasts. Our hospitals are not seeking reimbursement to cover lost revenue, but for expenses directly linked to caring for COVID-19 patients and protecting patients, staff, and the community from transmission of COVID-19.

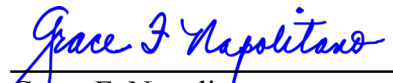
We ask that you give full and fair consideration of the Region IX processes and payments to ensure proper reimbursement for expenses during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also request

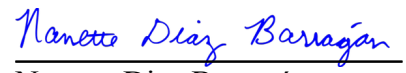
your assistance in bringing additional transparency to the process by providing information including a list of applicants, amount of claimed costs and obligations, and an estimate of when claims will be obligated. This will ensure a sustainable health care delivery system that can continue playing a vital role against COVID-19 and that is prepared to respond to the next public health emergency.

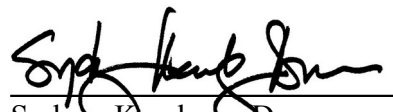
Thank you for your ongoing work with providers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to working with you on this important issue.


Sincerely,

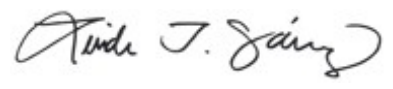
  
Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress


  
Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress

  
Nanette Diaz Barragan  
Member of Congress

  
Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Member of Congress

  
Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress

  
Linda T. Sanchez  
Member of Congress

  
Tony Cardenas  
Member of Congress



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Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



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Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



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Judy Chu  
Member of Congress