

May 18, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington DC 20510

Honorable Leaders,

We write to urge you to move rapidly and aggressively to ensure that every person in the U.S. who is eligible to vote is able to do so without risking their health. Our members represent the front-line health and medical professionals that are seeing first-hand the devastating health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As health professionals, we know that it will take many months – likely beyond election day, 2020 – before life is fully back to normal in the U.S. There will be no COVID-19 vaccine prior to election day. While we do not yet know how the COVID-19 virus will respond to seasonal weather changes, it is possible that there will be a resurgence of infections in the fall, placing people at even greater risk. This means that millions of people at highest risk (e.g. older people and those with a wide variety of pre-existing medical conditions) will still need to maintain vigorous physical distancing routines at the time of the election.

Many polling places are small and crowded, or require people to wait in long and crowded lines, making physical distancing almost impossible.

High risk individuals have options when it comes to obtaining groceries and medications, so that they do not need to risk their health. People must have similar options when it comes to voting. We need a vote-by-mail option to protect our most vulnerable patients.

No American should ever be forced to choose between their health and their right to vote.

We implore you to ensure that no American is forced to make that choice. Act now to ensure that every state is required to implement a vote-by-mail option before the 2020 presidential election, and is provided funding to do so in a careful and fair manner. This is the only way to protect voters and poll workers from COVID-19. It is the only way to ensure a free, fair, secure, safe, and healthy election.

Sincerely,