

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 3, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer:

We write on behalf of our constituents across New York to request your leadership in ensuring \$10 billion in federal funding for safety-net health care provider infrastructure is reinstated in the final Build Back Better legislation.

Our New York hospitals were grateful for the \$10 billion in capital investment project funding that was included in the September 26 text of the reconciliation package.¹ However, the latest release of the Build Back Better framework left out this critical investment for our most vulnerable hospitals. We urge Congress to continue prioritizing hospital and health care provider infrastructure by reinstating capital funding in the final reconciliation legislation.

COVID-19 exposed vulnerabilities in our hospitals' and health care providers' physical infrastructure and health information technology, especially for safety-net hospitals that deliver care to medically underserved populations. While Congress' coronavirus relief bills helped New York's health care providers avoid financial ruin during the height of the pandemic, they collectively suffered billions in losses and continue to pause capital spending, thereby delaying necessary infrastructure upgrades. The lack of capital support available to maintain, improve, and modernize the physical infrastructure of these providers mirrors a pattern of neglect in low-income and minority neighborhoods across the nation.

Financially struggling safety-net hospitals have had tremendous difficulty securing capital to support health care access and delivery system reforms. This has led to rapidly deteriorating hospital infrastructure in rural and urban communities. In addition, the nation's aging nursing home infrastructure must be updated to address the health care needs of the elderly population. Any plan to stabilize health systems and other providers serving vulnerable communities depends on capital support. It is the only way they can transform into less costly integrated care models and continue to deliver essential services to their communities.

As Congress continues to negotiate investments in infrastructure, any legislative package must include provisions to invest in and sustain our safety-net hospitals and health care providers. Doing so will help correct decades of neglect and ensure continued access to high-quality health care services in the marginalized communities these facilities serve, both throughout New York City and across this nation.

¹ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-117hr5376rh/pdf/BILLS-117hr5376rh.pdf>

We urge you reinstate \$10 billion in critical funding for capital investment projects for safety-net hospitals in the final version of the infrastructure legislation – allowing vulnerable providers to improve their facilities and provide quality, equitable care throughout the remainder of the COVID-19 pandemic and for years to come.

Thank you for consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ritchie Torres in black ink.

Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Yvette D. Clarke in black ink, with "M.C." written below the signature.

Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress

Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

Jamaal Bowman, Ed. D
Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress