

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20510**

December 16, 2021

The Honorable Deanne Criswell  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street, Southwest  
Room 828  
Washington, District of Columbia 20472

Dear Administrator Criswell:

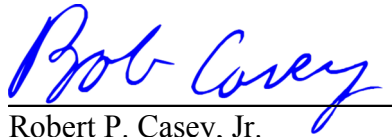
We write today in support of the requests recently submitted by Governor Wolf on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to assist Pennsylvania in addressing the latest surge in COVID-19 cases, which have resulted in case counts approaching levels seen during the winter wave in 2020-2021. As of December 16, there were over 4,600 patients hospitalized with COVID-19, and the numbers are climbing each day. The Commonwealth's test positivity rate is 14.4 percent, and the case rate is over 465 per 100,000 residents, indicating extremely high rates of viral transmission.

In recent days, we have heard from health care providers and hospital executives from every region in Pennsylvania raising concerns about the strain the current COVID-19 wave is placing on the health system. Frontline health care workers are burned out after nearly two years of the pandemic, exacerbating a nursing shortage that existed prior to the pandemic and threatening the ability of hospitals to treat all patients in need of care. Patient counts are so high that numerous hospitals in the Commonwealth have had to start diverting patients, as they are already above 100 percent capacity.

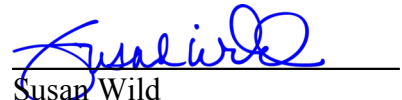
The requests from the Commonwealth include hospital strike teams, skilled nursing facility strike teams and ambulance strike teams to help decompress overburdened hospitals and nursing homes. The Commonwealth is also requesting additional support aimed at reaching rural regions, regions with higher social vulnerability, and regions with lower vaccination rates, including 1 million rapid at-home COVID-19 tests to help increase the testing rate and reach populations who may have a harder time accessing laboratory-based tests as well as an increased allocation of monoclonal antibodies to treat COVID-19 patients.

Thank you for your timely consideration of these urgent requests for assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact any of our offices if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



Susan Wild  
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



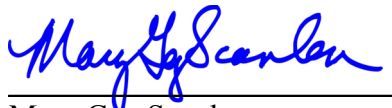
Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



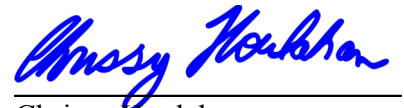
Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean  
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



Matt Cartwright  
Member of Congress



Conor Lamb  
Member of Congress

*Mike Doyle*

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Mike Doyle  
Member of Congress