



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

June 3, 2020

The Honorable Robert Kadlec, M.D., MTM&H, M.S.  
Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Gary L. Disbrow, Ph.D.  
Acting Director  
Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Dr. Kadlec and Dr. Disbrow:

Thank you for your long hours and dedication to fighting the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Americans are counting on you and your organizations to find solutions to this pandemic, which has killed over one hundred thousand people in the United States, devastated our economy, and threatened our national security. We appreciate that you and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) are taking unprecedented actions to accelerate the development and production of one or more vaccines that will safely and effectively protect us—and the world—from COVID-19. Today, we are asking you to do more and to cast a wider net.

The race to find, verify, produce, and distribute a COVID-19 vaccine is the most critical scientific challenge our nation has faced since the space race over 60 years ago. For decades, the U.S. has led the world in biomedical research and development. At this critical time, we cannot cede our leadership to other nations. As we write, there are an estimated 115 COVID-19 vaccine candidates in development worldwide. Information from [BARDA](#) indicates that, so far, the U.S. government is supporting a total of five.

We urgently request that BARDA diversify its investments across both proven and innovative vaccine approaches—to cast a very wide net and engage with a wide variety of industry partners in the development, manufacturing, and procurement of vaccines to respond to COVID-19. A diverse investment portfolio in multiple technologies will reduce the risk associated with the vaccine development, manufacturing, and procurement processes. Because there is so much we don't know about the virus, we cannot limit the number of paths we pursue to meet our needs.

Through the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, the CARES Act, and the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act, Congress appropriated an additional \$6.5 billion dollars to BARDA—including significant funding to support COVID-19 vaccine development and procurement. It is crucial that these funds be expended expeditiously and broadly to push more vaccines through evaluation and into production to curtail the spread of the virus, which has taken the lives of over 100,000 Americans, and continues to kill hundreds more every day. The pandemic has also stolen jobs from 40 million American workers, shut our schools, and promulgated anxiety and uncertainty across our nation and communities.

The status quo is unacceptable. The government must use every authority it has and aggressively promote development progress on multiple vaccine candidates to end this public health emergency. We welcome the opportunity to work with you further on this matter and ask that you share with our offices if you do not have the resources to respond to this urgent need.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



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David Trone  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Sanford D. Bishop Jr.  
Member of Congress

/s/  
C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Susan Wild  
Member of Congress