

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 7, 2020

The Honorable Peter Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Federal Center Plaza
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

The Honorable Brett Giroir
Assistant Secretary for Health
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Administrator Gaynor and Assistant Secretary Giroir:

Washington State has been working tirelessly as the first state to experience the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States. The Washington State Public Health Lab and the University of Washington Department of Virology (UW Virology) Lab have greatly facilitated the expansion of testing capacity throughout the state. However, Washington continues to endure a tremendous gap in the availability of sample testing kits. Currently the state's testing capacity exceeds the availability of supplies necessary to collect samples, limiting Washington's ability to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

As a delegation, we urge you to:

1. Provide additional sample testing kits to Washington State as necessary to adequately supply counties experiencing shortages, including counties that are experiencing a surge of COVID cases and rural counties that need tests to limit the spread and the strain on rural health providers.
2. Ensure that the additional 4,000 sample test kits that were supposed to be delivered to King County are promptly delivered, as previously stated.
3. Encourage allocating additional swabs to Washington State so laboratories, clinics, hospitals, and other testing sites can continue to pursue widespread testing.
4. Continue to provide federal support to drive-thru testing clinics, including Everett, and expand testing capacity north of Snohomish County.

We appreciate the removal of previous restrictions that inhibited federally provided sample testing kits from being processed in local laboratory facilities. However, without the necessary supply of sample testing kits and swabs, Washington's ability to identify cases is undermined and has serious repercussions for public health. For example, King County's lack of sample test kits has impeded the Seattle Indian Health Board from testing tribal populations. Further, across the state numerous nursing homes and senior centers with COVID-19 cases have been unable to

test all individuals within their facilities due to insufficient sample test kits, posing a tremendous threat to vulnerable residents, frontline workers, and communities at large.

Adequate access to testing supplies is critical to the prompt identification of cases necessary to allow public health responders to take protective measures and provide necessary treatment, all of which are essential to save lives and curb the COVID-19 public health emergency in Washington State.

Sincerely,



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



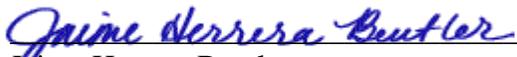
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



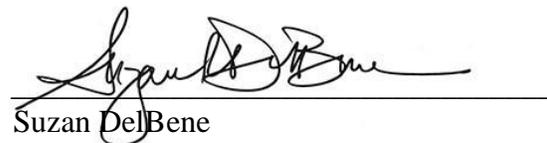
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



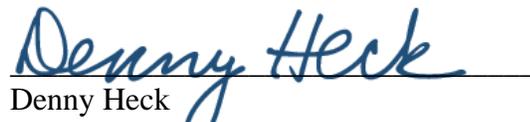
Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



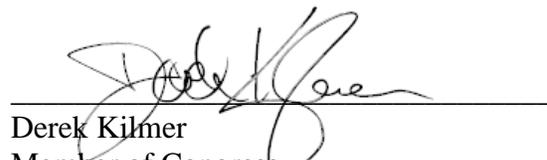
Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress



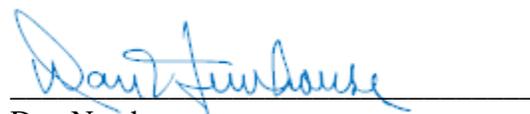
Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



Denny Heck
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress