

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 23, 2020

Robert R. Redfield, MD
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30329

Director Redfield,

Thank you for your leadership overseeing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). I appreciate the opportunity to work together to address the COVID-19 pandemic. I write today to request that first responders with symptoms be placed into the first prioritization category for testing for COVID-19 along with hospitalized patients and symptomatic healthcare workers.

On March 24, 2020, the CDC updated their interim guidance “[Evaluating and Testing Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)” to reflect three priority categories for COVID-19 testing, with the top priority including “symptomatic healthcare workers.” We agree that testing for our frontline healthcare workers is a critical priority for management and control of the current outbreak and the health of our society. I believe it is similarly important to test our symptomatic first responders as it will ensure our communities are protected during this unprecedented health crisis.

Across the country our first responders such as law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are on the frontlines keeping us safe and managing our communities’ emergency declarations. These men and women have dedicated their lives to ensuring our health and safety, and now it is imperative that we recognize that these emergency personnel are pivotal to the success of these measures and the ultimate health and cohesion of our society.

It is because of this work carried out by first responders that we need to ensure they be placed into the first prioritization category for testing. These brave men and women are at the forefront of this crisis, and have continued to perform their duties, ensuring the safety and well-being of communities across the country. As the nation’s leader in infectious disease mitigation, the CDC sets a national standard that states and localities often look to, making the CDC’s testing prioritization guidelines highly influential.

I look forward to your response on this matter that outlines the steps that the CDC will take on updating their prioritization categories for our first responders.

Sincerely,



Josh Harder
United States Representative (CA-10)



Paul Mitchell
United States Representative (MI-10)



Jahana Hayes
United States Representative (CT-05)

/s/

Sheila Jackson Lee
United States Representative (TX-18)



Zoe Lofgren
United States Representative (CA-19)