



U.S. Public Interest Research Group

April 1, 2022

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

As we approach the grim milestone of 1 million Americans dead from COVID-19, we have a chance to put the worst of the crisis behind us. We can only do it if Congress approves additional funding to maintain all of the virus-fighting tools at our disposal.

When it comes to vaccinating people against COVID-19—the most effective way to safeguard against serious illness and death—there's still work to do. Almost two thirds of Americans are fully vaccinated, yet barely a third have received the necessary booster to maximize their protection. And globally, nearly 3 billion people haven't received a single dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. That matters because as we've seen time and again, variants that originate elsewhere eventually make their way to American soil, putting our hard-won progress at risk.

COVID-19 tests are widely available now, but if funding dries up then testing capacity will as well, jeopardizing our ability to track virus spread and take appropriate measures to curb it. We also have several effective therapeutics that are already in short supply across the country. Without an infusion of resources, programs that could save thousands of lives by getting people quick access to COVID-19 treatments will be nothing but a pipe dream.

We urge Congress to quickly approve additional COVID-19 funding in the amount of \$22.5 billion, which should go toward securing new vaccine doses, providing global access to vaccines, ramping up COVID-19 testing and wastewater surveillance, and ensuring therapeutics are widely available to all Americans.

Every American life lost now is a tragedy, and one that's largely preventable by investing in the tools we have to fight this virus.

Sincerely,
Matthew Wellington
Public Health Campaigns Director
U.S. PIRG