TEMPLATE LETTER – Please place on hospital letterhead and add hospital-specific details

October XX, 2020

Transmitted Electronically

Dear Representative/Senator (Name):

On behalf of our XXX employees, our patients, and our community, HOSPITAL NAME appreciates your ongoing commitment to help protect Californians during the pandemic. As we continue to prepare for the long road ahead and respond to this unprecedented public health emergency, we write to you with both gratitude and a request for additional assistance.

Since early March, at HOSPITAL NAME, we have worked tirelessly to prepare and adapt to care for COVID-19 patients. As we’ve shared previously, our commitment has been to protect our community and support our nurses, doctors, and other health care heroes. We continue to purchase large volumes of supplies at higher than normal unit costs, retrain employees, and ensure that our facility is ready to serve our community as the pandemic persists. The investments we have made and continue to make are extraordinary, and we are putting them into practice each and every day.

As you are aware, Congress acted swiftly to establish and fund the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund (COVID-19 PRF), and we are grateful. This COVID-19 PRF funding has been a lifeline throughout the pandemic for many hospitals across the county — including ours. However, late last month the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) made changes to the program that will jeopardize our ability to retain these vital funds.

Specifically, HHS suddenly issued a new definition of “lost revenue” that is drastically different from its previous definition in a [June FAQ](https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/provider-relief-fund-general-distribution-faqs.pdf) document. Since the release of the June FAQ, hospitals in California and around the country have used this guidance for budgeting, accounting, auditing, and bond rating purposes. Unfortunately, HHS’ [new guidance](https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/post-payment-notice-of-reporting-requirements.pdf), released on September 19, drastically changes many of the definitions and will cause hospitals and health systems like ours to lose the ability to retain the COVID-19 PRF Funds. At HOSPITAL NAME, we have been relying on the original guidance and the original definition of lost revenue that focuses on comparing budgeted to actual revenue. We are extremely concerned with this sudden change.

**Simply put, while we continue to respond to the public health emergency and rely upon the already disbursed COVID-19 PRF funding, these sudden changes will actually destabilize our ability to continue our response efforts for our community and will seriously jeopardize our lifeline of support.**

Please keep in mind that successful reopening of the economy will depend on the security of the health care safety net provided by hospitals like HOSPITAL NAME. Hospitals around California and the nation are suffering dramatic financial losses that threaten the health care infrastructure and access to care. **We respectfully request your support with a letter to Secretary Azar asking him to reinstate the original COVID-19 PRF reporting requirements so that we can retain these critical funds.**

A model letter to Secretary Azar is attached for your convenience. Thank you again for your commitment to HOSPITAL NAME and our patients.

Sincerely,

NAME, TITLE, CONTACT INFORMATION