

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 15, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pence  
Vice President of the United States  
Chair, White House Coronavirus Task Force  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

We write to express our concern with the newly released reopening guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that the White House had previously delayed<sup>1</sup>. The newly released guidance is far less detailed than the original document that the White House reportedly blocked the release of, the *Guidance for Implementing the Opening Up America Again Framework*,<sup>2</sup> which included detailed health and safety measures that child care programs, schools, restaurants, and other places should adopt in order to safely resume operation. We urge the White House Coronavirus Task Force (“Task Force”) to work with CDC Director Redfield to release additional detailed guidelines – more in line with the original version of the *Guidance* – to provide states and communities across the country with public health, science-driven guidelines that they need to safely reopen.

States and communities are working on plans to reopen businesses, schools, and other programs and services; they need to make these plans based on scientific evidence to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19. The newly released CDC guidance provides only high level guidance, at a time that local decision makers need detailed, step-by-step guidelines about how to safely reopen in phases. The Task Force must prioritize public health and safety, and guidance needs to be based on science and evidence -- not politics or ideology.

We believe that having detailed, science-based guidance is important for each of the six categories, but particularly for schools, child care programs, and day camps. These programs face unique challenges because of the difficulties in enforcing social distancing and the high rates of asymptomatic cases. But the reopening of child care, schools, and day camps are

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/cdc-offers-brief-checklists-to-guide-businesses-schools-and-others-on-reopening/2020/05/14/3b46c29c-9615-11ea-91d7-cf4423d47683\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/cdc-offers-brief-checklists-to-guide-businesses-schools-and-others-on-reopening/2020/05/14/3b46c29c-9615-11ea-91d7-cf4423d47683_story.html)

<sup>2</sup> CDC Guidelines To Help States Reopen ‘Won’t See The Light Of Day’ After Trump Administration Shelves Plan <https://khn.org/morning-breakout/cdc-guidelines-to-help-states-reopen-wont-see-the-light-of-day-after-trump-administration-shelves-plan/>

essential components to reopening our economy. In addition to the current economic impact, school closures are exacerbating achievement gaps and contributing to significant learning loss among many students. Plans to reopen schools must work to address those educational inequities while also considering first and foremost the health and safety of both our students and educators. The newly released guidance to re-open child care programs and schools falls far short of what is needed for states and communities to be able to put in place thoughtful plans to reopen that will best serve their students and educators.

In addition to requesting you quickly release additional, step-by-step reopening CDC guidelines for child care programs, schools, day camps, and other entities, we ask that you please respond to us in writing, to describe why the original guidance was rejected by the Task Force and replaced by less-detailed guidance, and provide specific information about which portions of the initial guidance were seen as problematic.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



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MARGARET WOOD HASSAN  
United States Senator



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TIM Kaine  
United States Senator