



**Association of
American Medical Colleges**
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July 29, 2020

The Honorable James Clyburn
Chair
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus
Crisis
Committee on Oversight and Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Ranking Member
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus
Crisis
Committee on Oversight and Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Clyburn and Ranking Member Scalise:

On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), thank you for organizing the July 31 hearing “The Urgent Need for a National Plan to Contain the Coronavirus.” The AAMC believes that a decisive, coordinated action is urgently needed to save lives, end the pandemic, restore America’s economy, and return our lives to normalcy. It is critical that the United States takes a united approach to the pandemic.

The AAMC is a not-for-profit association dedicated to transforming health care through medical education, patient care, medical research, and community collaborations. Its members are all 155 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools; more than 400 teaching hospitals and health systems, including Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and more than 70 academic societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC serves the leaders of America’s medical schools and teaching hospitals and their more than 179,000 full-time faculty members, 92,000 medical students, 140,000 resident physicians, and 60,000 graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the biomedical sciences.

On July 29, the AAMC released [“The Way Forward on COVID-19: A Road Map to Reset the Nation’s Approach to the Pandemic.”](#) a blueprint containing 11 evidence-based actions to establish a comprehensive, coordinated plan to respond to the pandemic. The blueprint includes near- and long-term actions to re-align and better coordinate the nation’s response to the coronavirus, including:

Immediate Actions

- Remedy critical supply and drug shortages.
- Increase availability and accessibility of testing.
- Establish national standards on face coverings.
- Establish and enforce national criteria for local stay-at-home orders and reopening protocols.
- Establish national criteria for K-12 school reopenings and convene a working group to study different approaches by mid-August.
- Immediately expand health insurance through COBRA.

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- Begin planning now to prioritize distribution of the SARS-CoV-2 vaccine.
- Address and resolve health care inequities.
- Inform, educate, and engage the public.

Longer-Term Actions

- Broaden health insurance.
- Strengthen the nation's public health infrastructure.

Most critically, the AAMC urges the federal government to invoke the Defense Production Act or other powers to increase domestic production of supplies to ensure that no facility is ever caught short of what it needs, with a particular emphasis on the need for personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline health care workers.

Additionally, the AAMC urgently recommends that the U.S. set a goal of conducting 2.3 million tests per day, a recommendation based on a goal of maintaining a positivity rate of below 3%. To reach this goal, significant improvements in turnaround times for reporting test results must be made, which can be addressed by eliminating supply shortages, improving coordination, and through greater use of academic medical center labs.

Additional information is on the blueprint landing page aamc.org/covidroadmap, and a related opinion piece that AAMC President and CEO David J. Skorton, MD, authored was also published in the [Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com) on July 29.

Thank you again for your continued efforts to work towards the development of a comprehensive strategy to combat the coronavirus. Please do not hesitate to contact Tannaz Rasouli, Senior Director, Government Relations (trasouli@aamc.org), or me, with any questions.

Sincerely,



Karen Fisher, JD
Chief Public Policy Officer