



# COVID-19

A new federal mitigation package is crucial

## TO: NEW YORK STATE'S DELEGATION

*Our nation is at war against COVID-19 and New York State is the epicenter of this crisis. Our state desperately needs significant resources and needs them now. We are asking you to act now on a new COVID-19 mitigation package that provides critical support to New York State.*



### **Provide desperately needed fiscal aid to state governments.**

New York State is currently bearing a significant share of the cost of the public health response to COVID-19; the economic impact is having disastrous impacts on state tax revenues. New York State is facing a \$10 billion to \$15 billion shortfall in revenue. In the absence of additional federal mitigation steps, the state's budget will, out of necessity, be balanced on the backs of our members, our patients, our students, other essential state workers, and the citizens across the state.

At minimum, a new federal mitigation bill should:

- Establish a state fiscal stabilization fund for public colleges and universities, using the model in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, so states are not forced to cut public higher education at any level during the expected recession.
- Provide crucial additional support for state Medicaid costs.





## **Protect the nation's health care workers.**

Health care workers, including members of United University Professions, who work at the three SUNY hospitals in Brooklyn, Stony Brook and Syracuse and at the academic medical center in Buffalo are working at the front line in this pandemic. The next federal aid package must protect them, recognize their life-saving contributions, and protect the state public hospitals and the public medical, nursing, and allied health professions schools where they work and train the next generation of health care workers.

At minimum, a new federal stimulus bill should:

- Provide additional support to cover the ever-increasing costs associated with providing desperately needed personal protective equipment to health care workers fighting on the front lines of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Include funding for hazard pay at a rate of 25 percent of base salary for front-line essential workers, including all health care workers engaged in COVID-19 response.
- Provide emergency funding for our state public hospitals and academic medical centers to support them through catastrophic drops in revenue they are currently experiencing associated with cancellation of elective surgery and other non-COVID-related medical care as they prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 crisis.



## **Grow medical education and address racial disparities in health care.**

It is becoming increasingly evident that there are clear racial disparities in our health care system. The COVID-19 crisis has shined a light on them. We have a shortage of doctors and health care professionals in urban and rural areas, and we have a shortage of health care providers from communities of color.

To address these issues, and the future crisis of an aging population of health care workers, a new financial mitigation plan should include:

- Funding to expand enrollment at public medical, nursing, and allied health professions schools.
- Initiatives to increase medical-school enrollments of students from underrepresented communities.
- Increasing access to health care through universal coverage and the expansion of health care providers throughout New York State.

### **Pass a new federal mitigation package**

United University Professions believes that we must have leadership from our nation's capital—that protects and strengthens our states—for our country to come through this time of crisis. New York cannot be left to fight this battle on its own.

**[Send an e-letter to lawmakers at https://bit.ly/3cvFvFb](https://bit.ly/3cvFvFb)**