

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 11, 2020

Robert R. Redfield, M.D.
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Dr. Redfield:

We write today on behalf of our constituents in New Jersey and out of frustration at the delayed confirmation of New Jersey's twenty-three presumptive positive cases of Coronavirus, or COVID-19, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). New Jersey was anticipating confirmation of initial presumptive cases by Saturday, March 7, 2020, and the CDC failed to meet its own deadline. We request the CDC prioritize confirmation of initial samples so states can ramp up screening and testing.

As of the drafting of this letter, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), in conjunction with the New Jersey Public Health and Environmental Laboratories (PHEL), has sent test samples from twenty-three patients in the state with presumptive positive cases of COVID-19. The CDC has yet to confirm a positive or negative result for any of the tests that have been sent. When asked for an explanation for the delay in response from the CDC, New Jersey Assistant Health Commissioner Chris Neuwirth reported that the CDC could not provide an explanation.

While we understand that the CDC is quite busy handling this crisis, it is important the states can confirm a positive or negative test result in order to contain a potentially further damaging outbreak in our communities. Additionally, with the Administration's plan to distribute millions of test kits this week, we must ensure that the CDC can quickly and efficiently analyze test results. The gaps in testing we are currently experiencing hinder the nation's ability to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

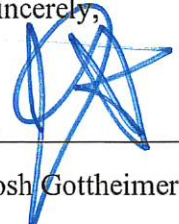
With that in mind, please provide responses to the following questions:

1. When can the State of New Jersey expect to receive confirmation of the pending cases currently with the CDC?
2. What are the CDC's plans to ramp up the capability to analyze tests with the distribution of millions of test kits nationwide?

3. Is it still the policy that the CDC must do the confirmation check of a state's presumptive positive diagnosis as a measure of quality control?
4. Is the CDC considering partnering with state, local, and commercial labs to allow them the capability to confirm test results for COVID-19?

We look forward to your prompt reply to this very urgent matter.

Sincerely,



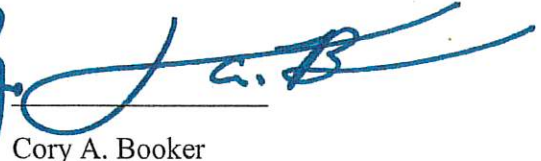
Josh Gottheimer

Member of Congress



Robert Menendez

United States Senator



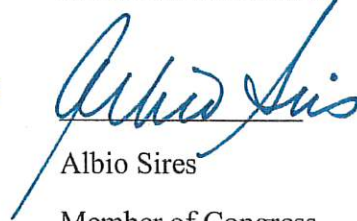
Cory A. Booker

United States Senator



Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Member of Congress



Albio Sires

Member of Congress



Donald Norcross

Member of Congress



Tom Malinowski

Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill

Member of Congress



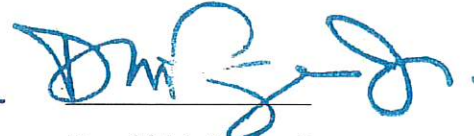
Bonnie Watson Coleman

Member of Congress



Andy Kim

Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Member of Congress