



Consortium of Universities for Global Health  
1608 Rhode Island Ave NW  
STE 240  
Washington, DC 20036

March 4, 2020

President Donald J. Trump and Vice President Michael Pence  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20050

Dear President Trump and Vice President Pence:

The Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH), based in Washington DC, is one of the world's largest, academic based global health organizations. Our mission is to improve the health of people and the planet. Of our 185 academic institutions, 80% of them are in the US.

Our nation has extraordinary assets to address COVID-19 through the highly experienced and specialized federal expertise at HHS, CDC, NIH and the FDA. They are best positioned to lead informed, evidence-based decisions that ultimately will benefit families at home and abroad and ensure that facts lead our response to support the health and welfare of our country and our people. Your Administration has an open door to tap our Consortium for information and guidance on how to address this public health threat. Our network includes scientists in the NIH, CDC, USAID, ASPPH, AAVMC and other relevant organizations.

As our national strategy (local, state, national and global) evolves to incorporate new, reliable information, we must remember that national and global collaborations, political will at home, fact based, consistent messaging and full funding are essential to getting the job done. It is completely understandable for your Administration to have you, Vice President Pence, as its spokesperson. However, it is vital that a challenge such as this has a public health expert communicating directly to the public. That person must be a scientist who is an expert in virology, public health and responding to epidemics. A scientist who can clearly and confidently communicate the facts to the public. Fortunately, the US has many such experts at the CDC, NIH and other US government agencies. Please appoint one of them to do this. A lack of timely, evidence-based communication is very dangerous in the midst of an outbreak.

In addition, we are asking you, President Trump to rescind the deep cuts you have proposed in your FY 2021 budget to the CDC, NIH, HHS, USAID and other US government agencies and exert US leadership to strengthen funding for the WHO's response to global health security. This is critical to the nation's ability to prevent, detect and respond to a pandemic. Deadly infectious diseases are immune to borders.

Thank you for your consideration. We are ready to do what we can to stop the spread of COVID-19 and strengthen the US' overall response to infectious disease outbreaks.

Sincerely,



Ann Kurth, PhD, CNM, FAAN  
Chair, CUGH Board of Directors



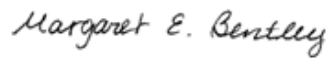
Pierre Buekens, MD, PhD  
Chair Emeritus, CUGH



Michele Barry, MD, FACP  
Vice Chair, CUGH Board of Directors



Keith Martin MD, PC  
Executive Director, CUGH



Margaret Bentley, PhD  
Secretary – Treasurer, CUGH