



July 20, 2020

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
U.S Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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*on leave of absence

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray,

On behalf of Research!America, thank you both for your unwavering leadership during this unprecedented crisis. We are grateful for the crucial role you are playing in ensuring that our nation remains vigilant as we combat COVID-19. In that context, I ask you to strongly consider inviting Gopal Khanna, the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), to testify at your next COVID-19 hearing before the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

The COVID-19 crisis has showcased major strengths in our health care system, particularly the resilience and resourcefulness of our health care workforce. But the pandemic has also laid bare serious weaknesses and introduced large scale, rapid pace adjustments in U.S. health care financing and delivery. AHRQ, the federal agency responsible for ensuring our health system meets the needs and expectations of the American people, must be brought in now to capture and evaluate these critical developments and inform ongoing response and preparedness efforts.

Our nation needs an evidence base upon which to determine how to weather, and emerge from, COVID-19 with a health care system that is stronger than before this crisis and better prepared for the next one. Absent such evidence, we are needlessly baking additional uncertainty and undue risk into the future we all share. AHRQ is the right agency to look to for building and evaluating that evidence base, and it is time – past time – for our nation to fully leverage this asset.

As always, we are here to support your efforts in any way we can. Please feel free to reach out to us concerning this or any other issue.

241 18th Street South
Suite 501
Arlington, VA 22202

P 703.739.2577

F 703.739.2372

E info@researchamerica.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Woolley".

Mary Woolley

President and CEO, Research!America