



June 18, 2020

President of the United States  
Vice President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Vice President:

I am the president and CEO of LeadingAge, which represents more than 5,000 nonprofit organizations that provide care and support for millions of older Americans every day, including skilled nursing, long-term care, home health care, hospice, and the entire field of aging services.

As you prepare to meet with governors about reopening, I urge you to put the health and lives of millions of older Americans at the top of the agenda—today and every day.

As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a national nightmare like we've never seen. Over 80,000 people over 65 have died in just a few months, and millions more are threatened. Nearly half of all COVID-19 fatalities have been nursing home residents and staff. For months, brave and dedicated workers have delivered care to older Americans—at great risk to their own health and safety.

On top of all this, early reopenings and nationwide protests are increasing the number of people exposed to the virus. We are not yet out of the first wave of COVID-19 and medical experts say a second wave could arrive in the coming months. This pandemic is not over, especially for older Americans who will continue to be threatened unless decisive action is taken by you and your Administration.

That is why it is so important that the conversations you are having today—and all conversations about the reopening of our communities—include how best to protect older Americans from the coronavirus as a highest priority. We hope you agree that it would be unconscionable to have any discussions about reopening without making our older citizens a priority.

More broadly, we urge you to use this meeting and your time in the coming weeks to assert your leadership to ensure that the federal government fulfills its responsibility to protect older Americans by developing a comprehensive and coordinated plan to secure and deliver the life-saving supplies and resources that aging services providers need to keep people safe: testing, PPE, financial resources, and real support for care workers risking their lives every day.

Older adults and their care workers also need your support as Congress develops the next coronavirus relief package. LeadingAge has developed Five Essential Actions for Older Lives, which offer a framework for [legislative proposals](#) we have submitted to Congress. Your support for these measures would help ensure that older Americans know that you are focused on their most urgent needs.

If you would like to learn more about the needs of our nonprofit members and their residents, we would welcome a conversation at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Smith Sloan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Katie Smith Sloan  
President & CEO  
LeadingAge