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March 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader Schumer,

As you work to deliver a robust stimulus plan that meets the needs of the American people during the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, I strongly urge you to include provisions that will prevent direct payments from counting against income calculations for other income-oriented benefits. Specifically, I wish to draw your attention to Americans receiving healthcare subsidies under the *Affordable Care Act* and disability pensions provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Should direct payments count against these individuals' incomes, they may very well lose critical benefits.

As you know, the ACA makes quality health coverage available at reduced or no cost for people with incomes below certain levels. More than ten million Americans are eligible for subsidies under Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and other healthcare plans. Without these subsidies, many of these individuals and families would be unable to access healthcare plans under the ACA. Similarly, when assessing a veteran's eligibility for a pension, the VA considers a variety of sources of revenue to determine a veteran's annual income. If a veteran's income exceeds the income limit set by the VA, he or she does not qualify for a pension or loses their benefits.

These examples underscore the importance of precluding any direct-payments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic from being counted as income for Americans receiving other income-oriented benefits. I therefore strongly urge you to include provisions in any final

stimulus agreement protecting Americans receiving healthcare subsidies, VA disability pensions, and other income-based services and benefits. With warm regards, I remain,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alcee L. Hastings". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress