



United States Senate

May 21, 2020

The Honorable Michael Pence
Vice President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

This is to request your help in establishing a fair and transparent system for distributing therapeutics to states so that medical treatments approved to treat coronavirus patients may be appropriately and efficiently allocated to hospitals as soon as possible.

While Remdesivir, the experimental coronavirus drug approved for emergency use by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in May, has given doctors new hope for treating patients infected with coronavirus, the process by which Remdesivir was initially distributed to states, counties, and hospitals caused significant confusion. It is critical that we improve the distribution process going forward.

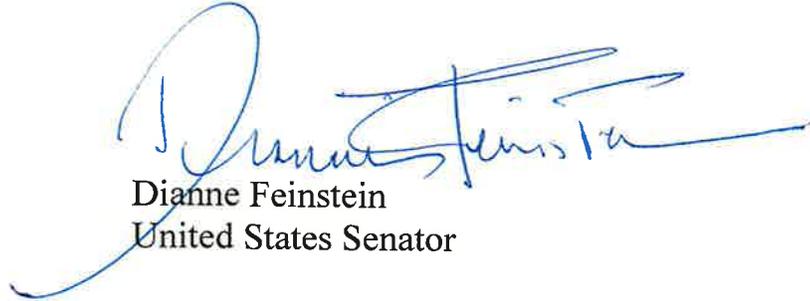
I believe that we can learn from the experience of the H1N1 pandemic in 2009, when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was the designated agency responsible for distributing the drug Peramivir. Health care providers were able to submit requests for Peramivir through a clearly defined process. Similar transparency and details must be provided for the distribution of Remdesivir and future therapeutics approved to treat coronavirus patients.

While we wait for a vaccine to be developed for this virus, the availability and rapid distribution of therapeutics to those most in need will be our best chance at significantly reducing morbidity and mortality during the pandemic. The process should consider the disproportionate burden the disease has already inflicted on communities of color, the elderly, people living in poverty, and those lacking stable housing. Developing an effective, efficient, and transparent system now will also aid in distributing a vaccine once one is developed.

As more therapeutics are approved by the FDA for emergency use, and as we prepare for a second deadly wave of coronavirus that many health experts believe is inevitable later this year, I would welcome the opportunity to work with your task force to address any remaining gaps in our preparedness.

Thank you for your work in this difficult arena, and let me know if I can help in any way.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

DF/af