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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 2, 2020

### COMMITTEES

ARMED SERVICES  
BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN  
DEVELOPMENT  
JUDICIARY  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Honorable Michael R. Pence  
The Vice President  
Old Executive Office Building  
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Vice President Pence:

I write to you today regarding the ongoing threat of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). I appreciate your leadership on critical efforts to contain the spread of the disease and to accelerate the development of vaccines and medical countermeasures, and I stand ready to assist the administration's efforts in any way necessary. Given the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recent reports of the first cases of community transmission and the first COVID-19 related deaths within the United States, I understand that time is of the essence.

Under President Trump's leadership, the United States has taken critical steps aimed at mitigating a spread of greater magnitude within our borders. From issuing travel advisories and restrictions, to implementing protocols for traveler screening and quarantine, these decisions demonstrate a strong commitment to domestic containment efforts. These actions are especially warranted given the unacceptable lack of transparency and accountability we have seen from the government of China. I hope the administration will continue to hold the government of China accountable and to consider additional travel restrictions if necessary to help reduce transmission to the United States and to protect the American people.

Furthermore, the outbreak has drawn justified attention to disruptions in global pharmaceutical and medical device supply chains, an issue that warrants sustained attention and ultimately action, to strengthen our supply chains moving forward. As outbreaks continue to intensify around the world, we in the U.S. Senate stand ready to provide the resources necessary to fully implement your mitigation plan.

As you know, North Carolina is home to cutting edge medical institutions, including academic medical centers, world class health systems, and global leaders in biopharmaceutical research and development. Our health systems have demonstrated success with respect to best practices in the quarantine and treatment of highly infectious diseases, and are prepared to treat affected patients should the need arise.

North Carolina is also home to some our nation's largest military installations, including Fort Bragg and Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. As I wrote to Secretary of Defense Esper last

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week, it is imperative for the Department of Defense to be prepared and take preventative action in order to protect American servicemembers and military families both at home and abroad. We must keep partisan politics out of our nation's prevention and response efforts, and I stand ready to work with my colleagues in the Senate to pass supplemental funding, in accordance with the Administration's request, without delay.

Again, I thank you for your strong leadership, and please do not hesitate to contact me if I, or any of North Carolina's leading entities, can be of assistance during your critical response and prevention efforts.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thom Tillis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Thom Tillis  
United States Senator

CC: Alex Azar, Secretary of Health and Human Services