

The AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of  
IMMUNOLOGISTS



*President*  
Jeremy M. Boss, Ph.D.

April 15, 2020

*Vice President*  
Jenny P. Ting, Ph.D.

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

*Past President*  
JoAnne L. Flynn, Ph.D.

*Secretary-Treasurer*  
Edith M. Lord, Ph.D.

*Councillors*  
Gary A. Koretzky, M.D., Ph.D.  
Mark M. Davis, Ph.D.  
Akiko Iwasaki, Ph.D.  
Stephen Jameson, Ph.D.

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

*Executive Director*  
M. Michele Hogan, Ph.D.

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. President, Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader  
McCarthy, and Minority Leader Schumer:

We are the leadership of The American Association of Immunologists (AAI), the nation's largest professional association of research scientists and clinicians who are dedicated to studying the biology of the immune system. Many of our members are pioneers in discovering ways to prevent, treat, and cure infectious diseases, as well as understanding and developing treatments for cancer, autoimmune diseases, and myriad other chronic diseases. Included among these investigators are those deeply immersed in research that may lead to the development of vaccines and treatments for COVID-19. What they are learning will no doubt also help prepare our nation and world for future pandemics.

We thank Congress and the Administration for acting expeditiously to provide the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other vital Federal agencies with additional funding to support the scientists and public health officials who are working tirelessly to address the current pandemic. Through constant communication and collaboration, the global immunology research and medical communities are responding to this unprecedented challenge; we are confident that these efforts – with your continued support – will produce the scientific discoveries needed to combat this disease. We are grateful to our clinical members – and all physicians, nurses, and other health personnel – who are bravely and indefatigably

on the front lines, putting professional duty ahead of their personal health concerns.

As we consider all that must still be done, we believe it is imperative that scientists and public health professionals maintain a leading voice in decisions regarding national, state, and local responses to the current crisis. In particular, Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, a valued member of our organization since 1973, has spoken candidly, honestly, and reliably about this pandemic, as he has about many other critically important public health issues since assuming the position of director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) in 1984. Over this time, he has honorably and effectively served six U.S. presidents; as a testament to his service, President George W. Bush awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2008. As the world combats this dangerous and deadly infectious disease, Dr. Fauci's strong, nonpartisan voice of experience and leadership has never been more important. We therefore urge our national leaders and the public to continue to heed the advice of, and offer their full support to, Dr. Fauci, his NIAID and CDC colleagues, and other scientific and clinical experts, as we chart the best course forward in defeating the novel coronavirus.

In recent weeks, there have been alarming reports about the political targeting of scientists who are instrumental in leading us through this threat to our lives and liberty. While there are always those willing to exploit a crisis, it is imperative that we do not allow these voices to interfere with, or undermine confidence in, the best scientific, epidemiologic, or public health policy advice or decisions. Now more than ever, it is essential that we allow the science, and those who know it best, to play a leading role in guiding us through these difficult times.

Sincerely,

Jeremy M. Boss, Ph.D., President (Emory Chair in Basic Sciences Research; Professor and Chair, Department of Microbiology & Immunology, Associate Dean for Basic Science Research; Emory University School of Medicine)

Jenny P. Ting, Ph.D., Vice President (William Kenan Professor of Genetics and Microbiology-Immunology, Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, Center for Translational Immunology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine)

JoAnne L. Flynn, Ph.D., Past President (Distinguished Professor, Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics and the Center for Vaccine Research, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine)

Edith M. Lord, Ph.D., Secretary-Treasurer (Professor of Microbiology and Immunology and of Oncology, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry)

Gary A. Koretzky, M.D., Ph.D. (Professor, Weill Cornell Medicine's Department of Medicine; Vice Provost for Academic Integration, Cornell University)

Mark M. Davis, Ph.D. (Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; Burt and Marion Avery Family Professor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Stanford University School of Medicine)

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Akiko Iwasaki, Ph.D. (Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; Waldemar Von Zedtwitz Professor of Immunobiology and Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology; Professor of Molecular Cellular and Developmental Biology; Yale School of Medicine)

Stephen Jameson, Ph.D. (Professor, Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, University of Minnesota-Minneapolis)

Eugene M. Oltz, Ph.D. (Samuel Saslaw Professor of Infectious Diseases, and Chair, Department of Microbial Infection & Immunity, The Ohio State University College of Medicine)

David Masopust, Ph.D. (Professor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, University of Minnesota Medical School)

Tania Watts, Ph.D. (Professor, Department of Immunology, University of Toronto)

Ross M. Kedl, Ph.D. (Professor of Immunology & Microbiology, University of Colorado Anschutz School of Medicine)

M. Michele Hogan, Ph.D., Executive Director (Maryland)

cc: The Honorable Mike Pence, Vice President; Chair, White House Coronavirus Task Force  
The Honorable Steven Mnuchin, Secretary of the Treasury  
The Honorable Richard C. Shelby, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chair, House Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Chair, Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr., Chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee  
The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee; and Ranking Member, Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee  
The Honorable Greg Walden, Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee  
The Honorable Roy Blunt, Chair, Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee  
The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro, Chair, House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee  
The Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member, House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee  
Marc Short, Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the Vice President  
Joe Grogan, J.D., Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy; and Director, Domestic Policy Council