

ROSALYNN **FOR**
CARTER **CAREGIVERS**
INSTITUTE 

PO Box 647 • Americus, GA 31709

February 5, 2021

The Honorable Joseph Biden Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Congratulations on your inauguration. At the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers, we are familiar with your personal caregiving experiences. On behalf of America's 53 million caregivers – and the many more who start their caregiving journey each day – we thank you for recognizing and appreciating this invisible frontline of our nation's health care system.

Our founder, former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, famously said, “there are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need a caregiver.” Caregiving is an issue that affects us all at one time or another. It should be addressed through a public health lens, and the impacts of caregiving should be considered along with other social determinants of health.

It is with that in mind that I reach out today in response to the American Rescue Plan. My team, and the partners and caregiver advocates with whom we collaborate closely, were pleased to see that the proposed stimulus checks would include adult dependents – an essential provision for caregivers who often bear physical, emotional, and financial burdens in executing their caregiving duties for loved ones. Including those caring for adults in emergency paid leave policies would be a welcome addition, as so many are serving in this capacity as the pandemic has stressed facility-based care. We are likewise encouraged that the plan includes investment into behavioral health services and greater emphasis on food security, a challenge for many families and one that we are seeing among the caregivers we serve.

As you and your team move to implement these important policies, we urge you to further consider caregivers as [outlined in our November outreach to your COVID-19 Task Force](#), including carving out space for research. RCI believes that this is an important moment for us to collect data that can help shape responsive policy for years to come. We urge your administration to set up appropriate infrastructure to study the long-term effects on caregivers providing care for loved ones recovering from COVID-19.

On workforce development, we believe the public health jobs program should include training on how to identify and support caregivers as key to improving health capacity. And in order to adequately support paid professional and para-professional caregivers, we believe that a scaled-up

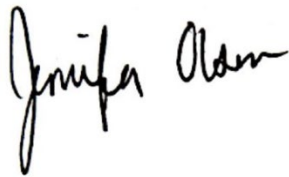
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testing program should include home and community-based services and respite workers, and that OSHA protections be extended to home care workers and adult day center workers. In the future, we would also encourage your administration to consider emergency paid leave for caregivers, especially those caring for vulnerable and at-risk populations.

Mr. President, we are tremendously grateful to you, the First Lady, and Vice President Kamala Harris for your continued recognition of the importance of caregivers to our health care system and our economy. We hope you will consider us a resource in expanding supports for caregivers. Inspired by the vision of Mrs. Carter, and more committed than ever to the growing ranks of America's caregivers, we are ready and eager to work with you to further elevate caregiving as a critical issue of public health.

Respectfully,



Jennifer Olsen, DrPH
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Mrs. Rosalynn Carter
First Lady Dr. Jill Biden
The Honorable Vice President Kamala Harris
Xavier Becerra, Secretary-designate, Department of Health and Human Services