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Scott Fitzpatrick
Missouri State Treasurer
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On behalf of the state's physicians and surgeons, MSMA thanks you for your leadership on the Governor's CARES Act Funding Working Group. We understand there are complex requirements to consider prior to the distribution of relief funds.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout has not spared private physicians and their practices. Many independent physicians necessarily had to stop seeing patients as a result of the statewide stay-at-home order. Others had to reschedule appointments in order to preserve personal protective equipment, or to adhere to strict social distancing.

According to a study by the American Medical Association, the average Missouri physician generates \$2.1 million in economic activity. In a normal economy, physicians in this state support almost 174,000 jobs and \$13.8 billion in wages and benefits.

Although some CARES funding was directed at hospitals and hospital-based physicians, very little has been available to independent physicians and physician-owned practices.

We propose to create a funding pool from Federal CARES funds to reimburse physician practices and community service organizations for COVID-19-related expenses. In addition to independent physician practices, other organizations that may be included in this program include senior housing facilities, food pantries and nutrition sites, counseling providers, child welfare and foster care programs, and case management organizations. These entities would be able to request reimbursement for costs that are not otherwise reimbursed through state, local, federal or private funds. The CARES funds for this program could be allocated from funds returned by local governments unable to utilize their full allotment from the state and 20% of funding to state and local government from a future Congressional COVID-19 relief package.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of this request. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

George J. Hruza, MD, MBA, FAAD
President