



July 6, 2020

The Honorable Ned Lamont  
Governor  
State of Connecticut  
Executive Chambers  
State Capitol  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Lamont:

There is no better example of a successful public-private partnership in battling the insidious COVID-19 virus in our entire Nation than the work we accomplished together in Connecticut by developing and implementing nursing home alternative recovery centers. These centers addressed hospital capacity issues and were instrumental in Connecticut's strategy to cohort nursing home residents during the pandemic. The recovery statistics for those served in these centers was astonishing.

We applaud your administration for its recent decision to continue operating two of the centers as a key strategy to prevent the spread of the virus in the anticipated second fall wave. In this regard, I am continuing to pledge the resources and expertise of Athena Health Care Systems to once more work with your government with the goal of expanding our state's readiness for the second wave by developing as many 1200 alternative recovery center beds. I am now working to identify additional nursing home operators to assist in standing up a portion of the needed beds, but Athena is committing to operate all 1200 beds if needed. And you can continue to count on the support of the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities/Connecticut Center for Assisted Living (CAHCF/CCAL) where I chair the association's board of directors. We believe that our best chance of keeping COVID-19 out of our general nursing home population and other congregate settings is starting the planning process now for establishing the alternative recovery center 1200 bed capacity that we will need to defeat COVID-19 in our state.

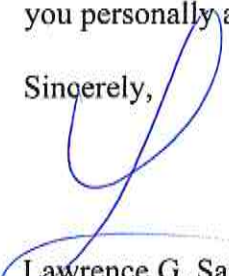
Our Connecticut nursing homes will also continue to need your support as we continue to battle COVID-19 and prepare for the second wave. I know you are acutely aware of the devastating toll the virus has taken on our residents, employees and nursing home operators. While the federal and state support provided to date has been a lifeline during the pandemic, Connecticut nursing homes will need further help to recover from the low occupancy and dramatic revenue losses caused by the pandemic. Our nursing homes will need your help to rebound to a position of strength so they can serve our ever aging frail and elderly residents from a position of stability.

I am reaching out to you at this time to begin a new discussion about increasing the state's commitment from the \$1.3 billion in federal Coronavirus Relief Funds for nursing homes. We need to look no further than the increasing number of states around the country that are seeing their COVID-19 numbers increase and the recovery plans falter. Connecticut nursing homes will be on the front lines in preventing this from happening in Connecticut now and into 2021.

Two forms of nursing home assistance are needed: (1) to address the sector's substantial revenue loss, the sector requires the equivalent of a 25% Medicaid rate increase until June 30, 2021; and (2) nursing homes will need a second round of deferral on the next quarterly provider tax payment (due July 31), including a one-year repayment plan.

I, and other leaders from CAHCF/CCAL, would like the opportunity to discuss these issues with you personally and will be calling on your office for this purpose.

Sincerely,



Lawrence G. Santilli, Chair  
CAHCF/CCAL Board of Directors

Cc: Matt Barrett, CAHCF/CCAL President and CEO