



March 27, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

Thank you for your stewardship of the state during this pandemic.

We write to you today with few words and short time: the proposed cuts to our hospitals in Central Brooklyn are cruel, inhumane, and unacceptable.

SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Kings County Hospital, Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center, and Brookdale University Hospital Medical Center stand to lose **\$38 million dollars** under the proposed recommendations from the Medicaid Redesign Team (“MRT II”). This would be devastating in the normal course of business; it is catastrophic during a pandemic.

We are in unprecedented times. New York is the *global* epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic. These hospitals disproportionately serve the most vulnerable in this epicenter; including the poor, the elderly, and those suffering from comorbidities. As the representatives of these hospitals and those they serve, we cannot accept these proposed cuts. Today, we ask that you reject any proposal that cuts aid to these hospitals at a time when they are shouldering the greatest public health responsibility in our state’s history.

Kings County Hospital is operating at 95% capacity and using hand sanitizer to reuse face masks. SUNY Downstate doctors are being asked to split ventilators between patients, and Brookdale has frontline staff home sick due to COVID-19 infection. And according to your recent update, all of this is happening *before* the apex of crisis. We should be providing additional aid — not austerity budgets — during this pandemic.

Earlier this week, you said that as a state, “We are going to fight every way we can to save every life that we can, because that's what I think it means to be an American...We're not going to

accept a premise that human life is disposable. We're not going to put a dollar figure on human life.”

We agree. As such, we cannot, in good conscience, accept a budget that includes these cuts. We urge you to reject them and find a more prudent way to protect the most vulnerable in our state. Our constituents’ lives depend on it.

Sincerely,



Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie



Assemblymember Diana C. Richardson

& undersigned;



State Senator Kevin Parker



State Senator Roxanne
Persaud



Assemblymember N. Nick
Perry



Assemblymember Latrice
Walker