



January 7, 2022

The Honorable Xavier Becerra, J.D.
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

RE: Better accounting of the remaining funds in the Provider Relief Fund (PRF)

Dear Secretary Becerra:

On behalf of the Emergency Department Practice Management Association (EDPMA), **we kindly request that you provide a more thorough accounting of the funds remaining in the Provider Relief Fund (PRF).** While we appreciate the efforts of the Administration to provide an account of entities who have accepted the funds (per this [website](#)), this accounting does not have an accurate accounting of any remaining funds in the account. EDPMA is the nation's largest professional physician trade association focused on the sustainable delivery of high-quality, cost-effective care in the emergency department (ED), and its members handle over half of the visits to U.S. emergency departments each year.

Our membership has relied on key funding from the PRF not only through the General Distributions but also as part of the relief for caring for the uninsured. We appreciate that, as part of the [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021](#), Congress recently requested that the Administration distribute most of the funding within the PRF, reserving some amounts to help cover additional care for the uninsured. Specifically, the legislation stated the following:

Not less than 85 percent of (i) the unobligated balances available as of the date of enactment of this Act, and (ii) any funds recovered from health care providers after the date of enactment of this Act, shall be for any successor to the Phase 3 General Distribution allocation to make payments to eligible health care providers based on applications that consider financial losses and changes in operating expenses occurring in the third or fourth quarter of calendar year 2020, or the first quarter of calendar year 2021, that are attributable to coronavirus.

In response to this Congressional request, in September 2021, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [announced](#) the availability of \$25.5 B in funding, including Phase IV General Distribution and a special rural distribution. In late November, HHS [announced](#) the

initial rural distribution, and in December, HHS [announced](#) the release of \$9 B of the Phase IV funding, further indicating that additional funds from this phase would be released in 2022.

We also acknowledge that one key variable related to the amount of funds remaining in the PRF is how much of the funding may be returned as part of the Phase I reporting. Those funds were required to be returned to HRSA by December 31, 2021.

According to [an analysis](#) by the Urban Institute, as of October 2021, \$26.8 B remained in the Provider Relief Fund. This analysis does not include any funds to be allocated through Phase IV General Distribution, given that those funds (as noted above) had not been disbursed at the time of the accounting. And, unfortunately, while we appreciate this analysis, one directly from HHS would carry additional weight.

So, for all of the key reasons listed above, we kindly request that the Department provide a more topline accounting of the total funds remaining in the PRF so that our membership can better understand how additional funds (either through the General Distribution or for the uninsured) may be dispersed.

Sincerely,

Don Powell

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Powell, MD".

Chair of the Board of Directors
EDPMA