

THE NEW ENGLAND COUNCIL

May 14, 2021

Dear Member of Congress,

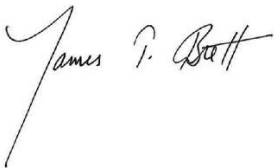
I write today on behalf of the membership of The New England Council to urge you to support [S.412/H.R.1306](#), the “National Coronavirus Commission Act of 2021.” In February, bipartisan legislation was introduced in the House and Senate to create an independent, non-partisan commission, closely modeled after the 9/11 Commission that investigated the September 11, 2001 terror attacks, to assess the nation’s pandemic preparedness and response, and provide recommendations to improve our country’s readiness for future public health crises.

Since the start of the pandemic, 37 million cases have been [reported](#) and more than 550,000 Americans have died from COVID-19. The New England Council’s membership includes hospitals and other health care providers who have been on the front lines of combatting this health crisis for over year. At the same time, other members across a diverse array of industries in our region have been deeply impacted by the resulting economic downturn. What they all have in common is a strong belief that we have a responsibility to do a thorough, independent review of what happened so that we can better understand what went wrong and what steps our nation can take to be better prepared for a future public health emergency.

As you may be aware, the National Coronavirus Commission Act of 2021 would establish a ten-member independent body comprised of prominent Americans with expertise in government service, public health, commerce, scientific research, public administration, intelligence gathering, national security, and/or foreign affairs. According to the legislation, the President and congressional leadership will have 60 days to appoint the Commission members following the enactment of the legislation. The Commission will hold public hearings and issue a publicly available report to the President and Congress within 18 months of its inception, with the possibility of limited extensions if necessary. To ensure independence, the Commission is required to hire an ethics counsel to address potential and actual conflicts of interest by any member.

We are pleased to see that this legislation has bipartisan support in both the House and Senate, and we are proud to add The New England Council to the growing list of supporters of this thoughtful and impactful proposal. We thank you for your consideration and sincerely hope that you will support this important piece of legislation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



James T. Brett
President & CEO

The New England Council

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