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Congress of the United States
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The Honorable Mark Esper
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

March 23, 2020

Dear Secretary Esper,

I write to urge you to consider the deployment of military field medical units to establish a field hospital with intensive-care unit (ICU) capabilities at Fort Hamilton, New York, and further develop that base to serve as a logistical center for military, FEMA, and inter-agency operations in New York City.

New York City has become the epicenter for the coronavirus pandemic, with over 9,000 residents testing positive in the City alone, in a state with over half the nation's positive cases. Our hospitals are dealing with a huge surge in patients and the number of patients is expected to peak in 45 days. Our hospitals are working day and night to increase the number of hospital beds and avoid being overwhelmed. A military field hospital at Fort Hamilton can be used for the evacuation and treatment of non-COVID 19 patients so that civilian hospitals can focus on patients with the virus, while also providing support and equipment to hospitals throughout New York City.

A medical brigade deployed in New York City would augment the already outstanding work that the City, State, FEMA, National Guard, US Army Corps of Engineers, and other agencies have done in recent days. I'm heartened by the news that the Javits Center will soon be operational as a field hospital in New York City, and I urge you to commit further resources in anticipation of continued needs. Based at Fort Hamilton, the field hospital will be able to access the outer boroughs of New York City that have relatively fewer medical options than more central boroughs. For instance, Staten Island directly across the river from Fort Hamilton has only 3 hospitals and has become a target towards which the National Guard and State have surged resources. More widely, the Belt Parkway directly outside Fort Hamilton offers easy access to the rest of New York City and the wider region.

As the major U.S. Army base in New York City, Fort Hamilton is ideally positioned to provide logistical and command and control capabilities to ongoing military and intergovernmental operations across the city. While I am heartened by the successful collaboration of city, state, and federal government to date, I am a firm believer that these efforts must have the physical

infrastructure and equipment to get the job done. Fort Hamilton offers appropriate infrastructure for such a deployment.

I urge you to study the suitability of Fort Hamilton for a military field hospital deployment to New York City, to help meet the need of our doctors, nurses, and support staff who are risking their lives to serve on the frontlines of this pandemic.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'mja', followed by a long horizontal line.

Max Rose
Member of Congress