

CONGRESSMAN

Jimmy Panetta

PROUDLY REPRESENTING THE 20TH DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Dear Neighbor,

The Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) has garnered a substantial amount of national media attention in recent weeks. **At this time, [the health risk to the general public on the central coast of California from COVID-19 is minimal.](#)** While COVID-19 has a high transmission rate, it has a low mortality rate. Nevertheless, now is the appropriate opportunity to prepare yourself and your loved ones in the event that the virus affects our community.

The family of coronaviruses include many common viruses, like the ones that cause the common cold. COVID-19 is a new a kind of coronavirus. The most common symptoms include fever, cough, and respiratory symptoms. In more than 80% of cases, individuals infected by COVID-19 have mild or no symptoms. In uncommon cases, more serious complications can arise, including pneumonia. We are continuing to learn more about its transmission, but because the most common symptoms are respiratory, so its primary mode of transmission is through coughing and sneezing. There are easy, practical steps that can be taken to dramatically lower your risk and the public's risk of exposure to the virus:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Stay up to date on vaccinations, including the influenza vaccine.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay away from work, school or other people if you are sick.
- Follow guidance from public health officials.

In the House of Representatives, I am seeking and securing resources to bolster effective public health responses on the Central Coast to mitigate any potential effects of COVID-19. My colleagues in the House and I passed [bipartisan legislation](#) providing more than \$8 billion in emergency funding to support federal, state, and local programs to prepare for and respond to COVID-19 outbreaks and protect our communities. This funding has passed the Senate and is expected to be signed into law by the president.



[Questioning HHS Secretary Azar](#) about the administration's COVID-19 response.

Additionally, [I questioned Health and Human Services \(HHS\) Secretary Alex Azar at our Ways and Means Committee hearing](#) about the administration's response to coronavirus, vaccine development and affordable disbursement, and public health strategies. I continue to call on officials to establish a clear chain of command on who is taking charge of executing strategy and restore the global health security teams (originally established after the Ebola outbreak in 2014) that were disbanded at the National Security Council and Department of Homeland Security.

Please know that I continue to monitor this public health concern closely and will keep our community apprised of any updates. If you have any immediate questions or concerns that I or my staff can help you with, please feel free to call my Congressional offices in Salinas, Santa Cruz, or Washington, D.C. or contact me through my [website](#). Please do not hesitate to reach out and let me know how I can continue to best serve you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Jimmy Panetta".

JIMMY PANETTA
Member of Congress