STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

December 18, 2020

Taylor Caswell
Director
Governor's Office of Emergency Relief and Recovery
100 North Main Street, Suite 100
Concord, N.H. 03301

Dear Director Caswell,

Pursuant to my authority under RSA 21-P:43; RSA 4:45; RSA 4:47; and Executive Order 2020-04, as extended by Executive Orders 2020-05, 2020-08, 2020-09, 2020-10, 2020-14, 2020-15, 2020-16, 2020-17, 2020-18, 2020-20, 2020-21, 2020-23, and 2020-24 I approved your written request, in attachment, to take the following actions related to the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds:

1. Authority for the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) to transfer $3,700,000 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funding, to the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in support of the COVID-19 response efforts. Effective through December 30, 2020. (100% Federal Funds)

2. Authority for DHHS to accept and expend $3,700,000 from GOFERR to support Division of Public Health Services, Long Term Care Facilities self-directed testing. Budgeted consistent with the request, in attachment. Effective through December 30, 2020. (100% Federal Funds)

The Department of Administrative Services is authorized to take the actions necessary to effectuate this authorization.

Sincerely,

Christopher T. Sununu
Governor

CC: Charles Arlinghaus, Commissioner, Department of Administrative Services
Lori Shibinette, Commissioner, Department of Health and Human Services

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
for
EMERGENCY RELIEF AND RECOVERY

December 15, 2020

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
State House
Concord, NH 03301

REQUESTED ACTION UNDER RSA 21-P:43; RSA 4:45; RSA 4:47; AND EXECUTIVE ORDER 2020-04 AS EXTENDED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER 2020-05, 2020-08, 2020-09, 2020-10, 2020-14, 2020-15, 2020-16, 2020-17, 2020-18, 2020-20, 2020-21, 2020-23 AND 2020-24

Dear Governor Sununu,

1. The Governor's Office of Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) requests authority to transfer $3,700,000 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funding to the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in support of the COVID-19 response efforts effective upon your approval through December 30, 2020. 100% Federal Funds.

Funds are available in 01-02-02-020210 – Governor's Office for Emergency Relief & Recovery, 19110000 – Office of the Director as follows:

	FY2021
085-588590 – Inter-Agency Transfer of Federal Funds	$3,700,000

2. Contingent upon approval of Requested Action #1, authorize DHHS to accept and expend $3,700,000 from the GOFERR to support Division of Public Health Services, Long Term Care Facilities self-directed testing, effective upon your approval through December 30, 2020. 100% Federal Funds.

Funds will be budgeted as follows:

05-95-90-900010-19510000 LONG TERM CARE FACILITIES – GOFERR FUNDS		
CLASS	ACCOUNT	BUDGET REQUEST
103 - CONTRACTS FOR OP SERVICES	502507	$ 3,700,000
	TOTAL EXPENSES	$ 3,700,000
SOURCE OF FUNDS		
00D – Transfer of Federal Funds	488502	$ 3,700,000
	TOTAL FUNDS	$ 3,700,000

EXPLANATION

This request seeks approval to allocate an additional $3,700,000, to be used for long-term care facilities COVID-19 testing of the facility staff every 28 days and a percentage of the staff to test each subsequent week.

The Department of Health and Human Services has provided COVID-19 testing for long-term care facility residents and staff since the beginning of the pandemic. These nursing home residents and staff have been greatly afflicted by the virus as evident in the number of COVID-19 cases (3,301), hospitalizations (219) and deaths (463). In order to prevent/limit the spread of the virus, CMS requires that long-term care facilities perform surveillance testing. Surveillance testing identifies asymptomatic individuals who test positive, enabling the facilities to quickly isolate the affected individual and quarantine their close contacts (both staff and residents). Additional infection control measures are implemented within facilities to reduce the spread of the virus. The Department's Division of Public Health Services provides notification of testing results, training, case investigation, monitoring, infection control guidance, technical assistance and support to these facilities daily. These actions have limited the spread of the virus in the facility.

The Department has facilitated the surveillance testing regime through targeted funding provided by CDC. Testing costs have now exceeded CDC funding availability, and the Department is seeking assistance from GOFERR to continue surveillance testing through December 30, 2020.

The Department's strategy in testing continually evolves to align with CMS requirements and transmission rates. The Department and long-term care facilities have partnered from the get-go and continue to collaborate as we transition to a long-term care facility self-directed testing program. This transition enables facilities to manage their respective testing programs independent of the Department. Self-directed testing contracts with all of the long-term care facilities are in development with a start date of late October/early November. In preparation, nursing homes have begun to contract with certified laboratories to provide testing. Test results will continue to be reported to the Division of Public Health Services through the laboratories electronic laboratory reporting systems. The Division of Public Health Services will continue to provide all services as previously listed.

Our data has shown COVID-19 enters the facility through the facilities' health care workers who reside in communities throughout New Hampshire. As a result, the focus of testing is the 11,730 facility staff. All staff will be tested every 28 days and 10% of staff will be tested each subsequent week. Testing reduces the spread of the virus amongst staff; ensuring staff are healthy in order to safely care for the residents. Additionally, and most importantly, testing mitigates the risk of viral spread to the 8,811 facility residents.

All Cares Act funds must be spent by the recipients before December 30, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa English
Deputy Director, GOFERR

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