Honorable Dr. Joaquin Arambula, Chair The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair Sub. 1 Health and Human Services Assembly Budget Committee 1021 O Street, Room 6240 1021 O Street, Room 8230

Sacramento, CA 95814 Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Susan T Eggman, Chair The Honorable Nancy Skinner, Chair

Sub. 3 Health and Human Services Senate Budget Committee

1021 O Street, Suite 8530 1021 O Street, Suite 8630

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**Re: Centers of Excellence to Address Long COVID**

Dear Budget Chairs,

I am writing to support the budget request of Assemblymember Bill Quirk that the State of California allocate $120 million toward the establishment of a Long COVID Centers of Excellence program, to be managed by the University of California. This is a critically important step in addressing the clinical care crisis faced by the estimated 2.7 million Californians with Long COVID plus those with associated post-infectious conditions such as myalgic encephalomyelitis / chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS).

Long COVID is now a recognized national crisis, with President Biden having announced on April 5 a “Whole-of-Government Effort to Prevent, Detect and Treat Long COVID”. Centers of Excellence will perform clinical care, carry out needed research, and engage in education, training, and outreach. Having a coordinated, statewide approach is critical to the success of this effort. UC, with its experience at managing grand scale projects and housing Centers of Excellence, is very well suited to play this leadership role in developing the needed statewide infrastructure. Moreover, having Long COVID Centers of Excellence in place will put California in an advantageous position when competing for federal Long COVID funds.

Thank you for your consideration.