

February 23, 2021

Senator Patty Murray, Chairwoman
Senator Richard Burr, Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States Senate
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Elizabeth.Letter@help.senate.gov.

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Ranking Member Burr, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Fenway Health, a federally qualified health center and HIV clinic in Boston, we write to urge you to confirm the appointment of Pennsylvania Secretary of Health, Dr. Rachel Levine, to serve as Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH).

Dr. Levine is eminently qualified to serve as ASH. She is currently Secretary of Health for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry at the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine, and the Academy for Eating Disorders. Dr. Levine is President of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO). She formerly served as Chief of the Division of Adolescent Medicine and Eating Disorders at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center. Dr. Levine has published and lectured widely on the opioid crisis, adolescent medicine, eating disorders, and LGBT medicine. Dr. Levine is also a member of the LGBTQI+ community and the highest level openly transgender public health professional in U.S. history.

As Secretary of Health for the sixth most populous state in the country, Dr. Levine routinely works with the Assistant Secretary of Health's office to build critical bridges between federal and state policies on the pandemic and more. Her election as current President of ASTHO is a clear testament to the level of faith other public health leaders have in her leadership. To have a former state Secretary of Health in the ASH position in the coming months, when there is an urgent need for closer alliance between federal and state pandemic policies, will be invaluable.

We are confident that Dr. Levine is the best possible candidate to serve as Assistant Secretary for Health in this time of extraordinary demands on our public health system. We strongly urge you to confirm this appointment with all deliberate speed.

Sincerely,

Ellen LaPointe
CEO

Carl Sciortino
Executive Vice President

Sean Cahill, PhD
Director, Health Policy Research

Carrie Richgels
Manager of Policy and Advocacy

Cc: Senator Warren
Senator Markey
Congresswoman Pressley