

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 13, 2020

Alex M. Azar, II  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

It has come to our attention that, in at least one military base used as a coronavirus quarantine for people evacuated from Wuhan, China, families there have raised serious concerns regarding the effectiveness of the quarantine. In light of the first confirmed coronavirus case today in San Antonio—and in light of our continued commitment to ensuring every possible precaution is employed at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland to both reduce public health risk to San Antonians and ensure the safety of those held there—we seek assurances on a number of fronts.

The concerns raised directly to us by the family of quarantined individuals elsewhere include:

- Possible insufficient disinfectant protocols for the doorknobs, playgrounds, and other common areas,
- Lack of enforcement for exposed individuals to wear protective gear in common areas, including those with recent and direct exposure to the virus,
- At least one coronavirus patient having been discharged from a base in error,<sup>1</sup> and
- Insufficient education regarding the separation needed of exposed individuals, including at group mealtimes.

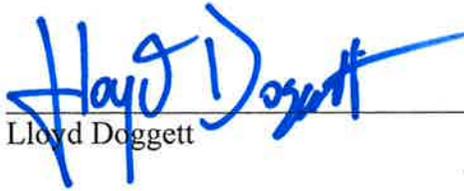
Additionally, given the rapid spread of coronavirus among health care professionals in China, we request further information about the precautions taken to ensure that not a single health worker in San Antonio is exposed to the virus as they attempt to care for this affected patient.

Whether these assurances take the form of an additional in-person briefing in Washington, a telephonic briefing, or a written response, we know you appreciate the urgency of this situation and will respond promptly. We also appreciate your hospitality to these evacuated Americans and commitment to safety inside and outside the base. We look forward to working together to be fully informed and fully able to communicate the situation to our concerned constituents in San Antonio.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2020/02/11/coronavirus-evacuee-san-diego-released/>

Sincerely,

  
Lloyd Doggett

  
Joaquin Castro