

March 2, 2023

The Honorable Rachel L. Levine, M.D.
Assistant Secretary for Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Washington, DC 20528

Dear ADM Levine,

We write to you today to congratulate you on the success of the Department of Health and Human Services' *Giving = Living* campaign encouraging the donation of blood and source plasma, and to urge you to continue the campaign. The undersigned groups represent patients who rely on blood and plasma derived therapies (PDTs) to survive and thrive, the collectors of blood and plasma, manufacturers of PDTs, and providers that administer these lifesaving blood and plasma therapies to patients. We know how critical regular blood and plasma donations are to the U.S. healthcare system, and we have seen the difference that the *Giving = Living* campaign has made. Thank you for the work that you and your staff have done to make the campaign a reality.

Blood and plasma donations have been challenged throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. At the outset of the pandemic, U.S. plasma donations were down as much as 20% in 2020.¹ Similarly, there were a sharp reduction of blood donations at the beginning of the pandemic, and there were subsequent critical blood shortages later in the pandemic.²

The *Giving = Living* campaign is an important initiative to support blood and plasma donation. The campaign has been a critical source of new traffic to *donatingplasma.org*, where potential donors can find their nearest plasma donation center. Traffic to the site has increased by over 40% since the campaign began and represented over one-third of all traffic to the site in November 2022. Similarly, the traffic to *Wheretodonateblood.org*, the corresponding site where potential donors can locate their nearest blood collection establishment, doubled during the campaign as compared to the traffic experienced during the same timeframe in 2021. Most of the increase in traffic was due to the campaign and over half of the users referred by the campaign resulted in external clicks to blood collection establishments.

We understand that the campaign will soon be winding down due to a lack of funding. We urge you to use all available means at your disposal to continue the campaign at least through the end of 2023. Since President Biden has extended the COVID-19

¹ <https://ashpublications.org/ashclinicalnews/news/6252/Researchers-Identify-Deficit-in-Plasma-and-Plasma?searchresult=1>, https://www.pptaglobal.org/images/Data/Plasma_Collection/2011-2020_TC.pdf

² See AABB Blood Summit, January 30, 2022, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8f5xpFVMBQ>.

Public Health Emergency until May 2023 this affords the department flexibility in utilizing existing relief funds.

Your championship for the patients who rely on blood and plasma donations is greatly appreciated. Any actions you can take to extend the *Giving = Living* campaign will help support a stable supply of blood and plasma donations in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Birkhofer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sr. Vice President, Head of North America
Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association

Alpha-1 Foundation
American Red Cross
America's Blood Centers
Association for the Advancement of Blood & Biotherapies
GBS|CIDP Foundation International
Hemophilia Federation of America
Immune Deficiency Foundation
Jeffrey Modell Foundation
National Hemophilia Foundation
Platelet Disorder Support Association
US Hereditary Angioedema Association