



**Herb B. Kuhn**  
President and CEO  
P.O. Box 60  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

August 6, 2021

Robert Knodell  
Acting Director  
Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services  
P.O. Box 570  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570

Dear Acting Director Knodell:

First, thank you for your leadership over the past several months assisting our members with the COVID-19 vaccine rollout and stepping into the role of acting director of the Department of Health and Senior Services. As you know, we have been very closely watching the recent surge in SARS-CoV-2 infections arising from the Delta variant, especially as the current state of emergency declared by Governor Parson is set to expire August 31. This surge already is straining the health care system in several parts of the state, with a domino effect as hospitals are required to transfer patients to other areas of the state that have the capacity to treat them.

We understand the governor has yet to decide whether to extend the emergency declaration beyond August 31 and certainly will want to make that decision with situational awareness close to that time. If the current level of COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations has not decreased, MHA urges the governor to extend the emergency declaration and maintain all waivers presently in effect. These waivers ensure hospitals can continue responding to increasing numbers of COVID-19 patients quickly, efficiently and absent regulatory burden. The state's willingness to provide hospitals and other health care providers the flexibility to address the variety of issues — foreseen and unforeseen — that have arisen during the past 16 months has been critical to the state's success in managing the pandemic.

Should you have questions or wish to discuss our requests in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact Jane Drummond, General Counsel, at [jdrummond@mhanet.com](mailto:jdrummond@mhanet.com) or Sarah Willson, Vice President of Clinical and Regulatory Affairs, at [swillson@mhanet.com](mailto:swillson@mhanet.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Herb B. Kuhn", is written over a white background.

Herb B. Kuhn  
President and CEO

hbk:jd/ts