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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 9, 2023**

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# Letter to U.S. Governors from HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra on renewing COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE)

Dear Governor,

Thank you for your ongoing partnership throughout the COVID-19 response. I write today to inform you that effective February 11, 2023, I am renewing for 90 days the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) as declared under Section 319 of the Public Health Service Act. Based on current trends regarding COVID-19, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is planning for this to be the final renewal and for the COVID-19 PHE to end on May 11, 2023. Rather than 60 days' notice, I am providing 90 days' notice before the COVID-19 PHE ends to give you and your communities ample time to transition.

Thanks to the Administration's whole-of-government approach to combatting the virus, we are in a better place in our response than we were three years ago, and we can transition away from the emergency phase. Over the last two years, the Biden Administration has effectively implemented the largest adult vaccination program in U.S. history, with nearly 270 million Americans receiving at least one shot of a COVID-19 vaccine.

As a result of this and other efforts, since the peak of the Omicron surge at the end of January 2022:

- Daily COVID-19 reported cases are down 92%,
- COVID-19 deaths have declined by over 80%, and
- New COVID-19 hospitalizations are down nearly 80%.

We have come to this point in our fight against the virus because of our historic investments and efforts to mitigate its worst impacts. Addressing COVID-19 remains a significant public health priority for the Administration, and over the next few months, we will transition our COVID-19 policies, as well as the

current flexibilities enabled by the COVID-19 emergency declarations, into improving standards of care for patients. We will work closely with partners including state, local, Tribal, and territorial agencies, industry, and advocates, to ensure an orderly transition.

To help you and your communities in your preparations for the end of the COVID-19 PHE, I have attached a fact sheet to this letter that includes information on what will and will not be impacted by the end of the COVID-19 PHE.<sup>2</sup> In the coming days, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will also provide additional information, including about the waivers many states and health systems have adopted and how they will be impacted by the end of the COVID-19 PHE. I will share that resource with your team when available.

My team throughout the entire Department and I are eager to partner with you to ensure this process is as seamless as possible. If you or your team have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [Lee.Stevens@hhs.gov](mailto:Lee.Stevens@hhs.gov) or [Zach.Kahan@hhs.gov](mailto:Zach.Kahan@hhs.gov) in my Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs.

Sincerely,

Xavier Becerra

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