

Rep. Stephanie Murphy (D-FL)

Rep. John Katko (R-NY)

### **National Commission on COVID-19 Act**

- The *National Commission on COVID-19 Act* is modeled on the 2002 legislation creating the “National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States,” also known as the 9-11 Commission.
- The bill would establish a bipartisan, 10-member Commission to (1) examine how COVID-19 emerged and spread in the United States; (2) evaluate the United States’ preparedness for and response to the pandemic; and (3) issue a report providing Congress, the President, and the American people with a full accounting of what occurred and recommending concrete steps the U.S. public and private sector can take to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the harmful impact of future pandemics.
- The purpose of the Commission is not to point fingers or assign blame, but rather to make the United States stronger and more resilient in the event we face another pandemic.
- Because U.S. leaders are—and should remain—laser-focused on solving the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the members of the Commission would not be appointed until late January-early February 2021, would begin their work by March 2021, and would produce their final report by March 2022.
- The bill would give the Commission broad authority to obtain information and broad discretion to examine topics the Commission regards as relevant and appropriate.
- At the same time, the bill would direct the Commission to analyze and make recommendations on specific topics like (1) testing, treatments, and vaccines; (2) personal protective equipment for health workers and other first responders; (3) medical devices, equipment, drugs, and supply chains; (4) social distancing practices, stay-at-home directives, school and business closures, and other mitigation measures ordered by government or adopted voluntarily; (5) the preparedness and capacity of the U.S. health care system; (6) the role of the National Response Framework, the Defense Production Act, and the Strategic National Stockpile; (7) the level of coordination among different federal agencies; between the federal government and state, territory, tribal, and local governments; between the federal government and the private sector; and between the United States and other nations.
- Like the members of the 9-11 Commission, the members of the COVID-19 Commission would be equally balanced between Democrats and Republicans, appointed by the President and congressional leaders of both chambers and parties. They would have deep experience and expertise in fields like public health, medicine, emergency management and response, and public administration.
- In the unlikely event that the public health emergency declared by the HHS Secretary due to COVID-19 is not in effect as of August 31, 2020, an expedited schedule would apply, with Commission members being appointed in September-October 2020, beginning their work by October 2020, and producing their final report by October 2021.