

**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
**WASHINGTON**

December 1, 2020

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to resign from my position as Special Advisor to the President of the United States. I thank you for the honor and privilege to serve on behalf of the American people since August, during these difficult months for our nation. I worked hard with a singular focus – to save lives and help Americans through this pandemic.

As you know, I always relied on the latest science and evidence, without any political consideration or influence. As time went on, like all scientists and health policy scholars, I learned new information and synthesized the latest data from around the world, all in an effort to provide you with the best information to serve the greater public good. But, perhaps more than anything, my advice was always focused on minimizing all the harms from both the pandemic and the structural policies themselves, especially to the working class and the poor.

These views were in agreement with those of many of the world's top epidemiologists and medical scientists from Harvard, Oxford, and other top academic institutions, as well as with those of thousands of medical and public health scientists from around the world. Although some may disagree with those recommendations, it is the free exchange of ideas that lead to scientific truths, which are the very foundation of any civilized society. Indeed, I cannot think of a time where safeguarding science and the scientific debate is more urgent.

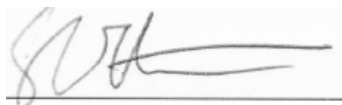
Throughout my time at the White House, it was an honor to work with several selfless colleagues in designing specific policies to heighten protection of the vulnerable while safely reopening schools and society. For instance, we increased and prioritized extra personal protective equipment and tens of millions of extra tests to nursing and assisted living facilities, initiated new infection control alliances, implemented more frequent monitoring updates using clinical guidelines to intensify testing, and instituted new outreach to independent seniors in communities. We also successfully designed rational guidelines for safely opening schools, a strategic use of the newly developed testing program, and a national stockpile of drugs for future crises.

We also identified and illuminated early on the harms of prolonged lockdowns, including that they create massive physical health losses and psychological distress, destroy families, and damage our children. And more and more, the relatively low risk to children of serious harms from the infection, the less frequent spread from children, the presence of immunologic protection beyond that shown by antibody testing, and the severe harms from closing schools and society are all being acknowledged.

Mr. President, your Operation Warp Speed team delivered on our promised timelines for new drugs and vaccines. I congratulate you for your vision, and also congratulate the many who did the exemplary work – we know who they are, even though their names are not those familiar to the public.

I sincerely wish the new team all the best as they guide the nation through these trying, polarized times. With the emerging treatments and vaccines, I remain highly optimistic that America will thrive once again and overcome the adversity of the pandemic and all that it has entailed.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Atlas', written over a horizontal line.

Scott W. Atlas, MD