

Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 26, 2020

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Cc: Vice President Mike Pence, HHS Secretary Alex Azar, Defense Acting Secretary Mark Esper, FEMA Administrator Peter Gaynor

Dear President Trump:

Your Administration claims to be resolving shortages of critical medical supplies, yet we have not seen evidence to corroborate those claims. White House Advisor Peter Navarro stated that, “we’re getting what we need,” and that we do not need to implement the Defense Production Act. In contrast, health care providers on the front lines of this crisis are urgently warning that their needs for these medical supplies are rapidly outstripping available supply. Manufacturers also lack clarity on production needs: a New York Times article recently stated that, “In interviews with participants in the process, from business executives to government officials, there is still widespread confusion about how much and what exactly each firm is supposed to produce.” It is unclear whether the Administration has conducted a basic national assessment on medical supply needs and production potential. We therefore urge the Administration to complete and share publicly a comprehensive national assessment and strategy that clarifies our critical medical supply needs and guides their production and allocation in this pandemic crisis.

Doctors and nurses are calling for help – for personal protective equipment (PPE) like surgical masks, ventilators, and other medical equipment and supplies – to protect themselves, so they can remain healthy and continue to serve patients, and to be able provide adequate care for patients. Both with the increasing number of infections and with testing ramping up, it is imperative we get more PPE to providers now. In a March 21 letter, the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, and the American Nurses Association stated: “Even with the infusion of supplies from the strategic stockpile and other federal resources, there will not be enough medical supplies, including ventilators, to respond to the projected COVID-19 outbreak.” We must listen to those fighting on the frontlines.

You have rightly said that we are at war against an invisible enemy. In war, you don't leave states to fend for themselves and to compete for supplies against one another. We need a national strategy to combat this virus – one based on an understanding of how many supplies we need, how many we can get, and who needs them. You are resistant to implementing the Defense

Production Act, but provide no evidence that we have enough supplies and that those supplies are getting to the right places.

The public deserves concrete assurance that there will be enough medical supplies in their hospitals to tackle this pandemic. We therefore urge your Administration to provide Congress and the public the following information within 48 hours:

- Hospitals and providers across the country are warning that there is an increasing need for more personal protective equipment (including surgical masks, gowns, gloves, and goggles), ventilators, hand sanitizer, and test kits.
 - Does the Administration have a formal list of critical medical supplies in need, identified by product and geographical demand?
 - Has it shared that list with manufacturers?
- Has the Administration conducted a comprehensive national assessment of critical medical supplies? If so, can the Administration provide the following information:
 - What is the aggregate projected need across the nation in one week, two weeks, one month, and three months for critical medical supplies, including PPE and ventilators, and where is this need located?
 - What is the currently available and projected additional capacity for United States manufacturers to produce these critical medical supplies, including PPE and ventilators, at the one-week, two-week, one-month, and three-month mark?
 - What is the projected delta between the need of critical medical supplies, including PPE and ventilators, and supply of such medical supplies, at the one week, two-week, one-month, and three-month mark?
- The Administration has stated that they have met with manufacturers and industry associations. For what medical supplies did your Administration meet and how many did you request for each critical medical supply?
 - How many manufacturers have either shifted production or increased production of supplies, and by how much for each critical medical supply?
 - What is the projected national shortfall, even after these conversations?
- How will manufacturers be incentivized to produce critical medical supplies to fill the gap, if not with the Defense Production Act? How will distributors be incentivized to send critical medical supplies to areas that are most in need?
- The Administration guaranteed the purchase of 500 million masks through an HHS Request for Proposals released on March 4th. As with masks, will the Administration incentivize manufacturing by guaranteeing the purchase of ventilators, gloves, goggles, gowns, hand sanitizer, test kits, and even more masks? If so, when and how much?

Mr. President, we are concerned about the health of the public and the health of our providers on the frontlines. We therefore ask for your immediate consideration in conducting this national assessment and taking on the necessary actions, including implementing the Defense Production

Act, providing the necessary guidance to manufacturers, and guaranteeing the purchase of all critical medical supplies. We look forward to your swift answers to these urgent questions.

Sincerely,



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