

April 3, 2020

Peter Navarro, Ph.D.
Assistant to the President and
Policy Coordinator, National Defense Act
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Pete T. Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C St. S.W.
Washington, DC 20472

The Honorable Robert P. Kadlec
Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Dr. Navarro, Administrator Gaynor and Assistant Secretary Kadlec:

The more than 200 undersigned organizations representing patients, health care providers, and public health professionals write to ask that the Administration take immediate action to alleviate the critical shortage across the nation of ventilators and personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks, face shields and gowns, resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. We are appreciative of the initial steps that the Administration has taken in recent days to address this shortage. However, it is already clear that current policy is not sufficient to fully address this crisis and additional, urgent action is required to protect the public's health and save lives.

This nation's hospitals are experiencing a crisis-level shortage of medical equipment, and the Administration has acted in recent days to address this need. On Friday, March 27, President Trump invoked the Defense Protection Act (DPA) to compel General Motors Company to accelerate production of ventilators.¹ The President then invoked the DPA again on Thursday, April 2, with the aim of securing additional supplies from 3M Company as well as others.² The Administration, working with private partners, has also arranged for shipments of medical supplies from China to areas most affected by the COVID-19 virus.³ The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has established a supply-chain task force that is collaborating with private companies.⁴ The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued emergency approval of the use of certain devices that can be converted into ventilators.⁵ Additionally, FDA has allowed emergency use authorization of new sterilization techniques that allow for certain PPE to be reused.⁶

Despite these important actions, there are still far too many providers on the front lines without the protection needed to save lives without unduly endangering their own.⁷ Patient health is jeopardized as well when providers cannot access the supplies they need. In the midst of this shortage, providers have been forced to resort to potentially dangerous tactics, such as splitting ventilators between two different individuals or reusing masks, that exacerbate the risk for everyone involved, including patients.⁸ Policy interventions thus far have also largely been limited to increasing the manufacture of needed supplies. Increasing the supply only helps, however, if there are clear, fair, efficient and predictable ways to purchase and distribute both current stockpiles and supply that will be manufactured. Reports from governors, healthcare providers, public health professionals and first responders across the nation have made clear there are not.⁹

Our organizations urge the federal government to do significantly more to facilitate the timely manufacturing and distribution of ventilators and PPE through a process that is transparent, equitable, based on need and is non-competitive. A streamlined and predictable supply chain must emerge that is capable of lasting the duration of the pandemic. Whether that is through further use of the Defense Production Act to coordinate and set nationwide priorities and distribution chains or enhancing and accelerating current work, action is needed now. Our nation is relying on healthcare providers to carry us through this crisis and they, in turn, are relying on the federal government to equip them to do so.

As coronavirus continues to spread and the infection incidence rises, time is of the essence. It is paramount that the Administration act immediately to ensure the safety of our healthcare workforce and patients.

Sincerely,

American Lung Association
American Heart Association
Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine (AIHM)
ACT UP NY
Adult Congenital Heart Association
Advocates for Better Children's Diets
AIDS Action Baltimore
AIDS Alabama
AIDS Foundation of Chicago
Allergy & Asthma Network
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
ALPHA-1 Foundation
ALS Association
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
American Association for Clinical Chemistry
American Association for Respiratory Care
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine
American Association on Health and Disability
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology
American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP)
American College of Gastroenterology
American College of Lifestyle Medicine
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Education Association
American Family Voices

American Federation of Teachers
American Geriatrics Society
American Kidney Fund
American Liver Foundation
American Medical Student Association
American Medical Women's Association
American Medical Women's Association
American Music Therapy Association
American Network of Community Options & Resources (ANCOR)
American Physical Therapy Association
American Podiatric Medical Association
American Public Health Association
American School Health Association
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
American Society of Hematology
American Society of Transplantation
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
American Thoracic Society
Arthritis Foundation
Association for Clinical and Translational Science
Association for Professionals in Infection Control & Epidemiology
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Association of Asthma Educators
Association of Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Pathology Chairs
Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Big Cities Health Coalition
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
CAEAR Coalition
California Thoracic Society
Callen-Lorde Community Health Center
Caring Ambassadors Program, Inc.
Cascade AIDS Project
Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Children's Environmental Health Network
Chronic Disease Coalition
CMP
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)

CommunicationFIRST
Community Education Group
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Digestive Disease National Coalition
Dorney-Koppel Foundation
Earth Day Network
Easterseals
Emergency Nurses Association
Endocrine Society
Epilepsy Foundation
Equality North Carolina
Fresno Madera Medical Society
GBS-CIDP Foundation
GBS-CIDP Foundation International
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality
Global Health Strategies
Global Liver Institute
GoodWorks: North Alabama Harm Reduction
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Health Care Without Harm
Health GAP
Health Resources in Action (HRiA)
HealthHIV
HEALTHY SCHOOLS NETWORK
Hemophilia Federation of America
Hep B United Philadelphia
Hep Free Hawaii
Hepatitis C Association
Hepatitis Education Project
HIV Dental Alliance
HIV Medicine Association
Housing Works, Inc.
Howard Brown Health Center
Immune Deficiency Foundation
Indiana Recovery Alliance
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Institute for Human and Planetary Health
International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders (IFFGD)
Interstitial Cystitis Association
Lakeshore Foundation
Latino Commission on AIDS
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma
Lutheran Services in America
Maine Public Health Association
March of Dimes

Mary Catherine Jones Consulting, LLC
Meltzer
Mended Hearts & Mended Little Hearts
METAvivor Research and Support, Inc
Muscular Dystrophy Association
NASTAD
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Black Leadership Commission on Health
National Black Nurses Association
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Disability Rights Network
National Environmental Health Association
National Forum for Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention
National League for Nursing
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable
National WIC Association
National Women's Health Network
National Working Positive Coalition
Necrotizing Enterocolitis Society
Neighbors Together
NephCure Kidney International
New Hampshire Medical Society
New York StateWide Senior Action Council
North American Primary Care Research Group
North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition
Not One More Life, Inc.
Oncology Nursing Society
Oregon Chapter of the Society of Critical Care Medicine
Oregon Thoracic Society
Patient Services Incorporated
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Prevent Blindness
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Prevention Institute
Project Green Schools
Public Health Institute
Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention (RAMP)
Resource Center for Parents & Children, Inc.
Respiratory Health Association
Restless Leg Syndrome Foundation

Robert G Gish Consultants LLC
Scleroderma Foundation
Social Security Works
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society for Pediatric Dermatology
Society for Public Health Education
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
Southern AIDS Coalition
The AIDS Institute
The Gerontological Society of America
The Hepatitis C Mentor and Support Group, Inc. - HCMSG
The Marfan Foundation
The Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Action Network (#MEAction)
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
The Well Project
Thrive Alabama
Treatment Action Group
U.S. Hereditary Angioedema Association
United Ostomy Associations of America
United States International Council on Disabilities
UNITEHERE!
University of Maryland School of Nursing
University of MD School of Nursing
University of New Mexico HSC
US COPD Coalition
Washington Thoracic Society

CC: The Honorable Mike Pence, Vice President, The United States of America
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Alex Azar, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Deborah L. Birx, M.D., Coronavirus Response Coordinator, White House
Coronavirus Task Force

-
- ¹ Statement from the President Regarding the Defense Production Act. (2020, March 27). Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/statement-president-regarding-defense-production-act/>
- ² Memorandum on Order Under the Defense Production Act Regarding 3M Company. (2020, April 2). Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/memorandum-order-defense-production-act-regarding-3m-company/>
- ³ Swanson, A. (2020, March 29). White House Airlifts Medical Supplies From China in Coronavirus Fight. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/29/business/economy/coronavirus-china-supplies.html?utm_campaign=KHN: First Edition&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=85441504&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-8CY6Stsqjf25voT4wmaCPBsM2aVj8qalqksvwoeHJR9oXbaxOnPaQe2S5-Yb5i4C266bpYNiV5BlhB1vKtPBYagA0oEQ&_hsmi=85441504
- ⁴ Muller, J., & Swan, J. (2020, March 29). Fixing America's broken coronavirus supply chain. Retrieved from <https://www.axios.com/coronavirus-supply-chain-task-force-2b6be629-170c-4874-9991-7f8b3f6c5320.html>
- ⁵ (2020, March 27). Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: FDA takes action to help increase U.S. supply of ventilators and respirators for protection of health care workers, patients. Retrieved from <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-takes-action-help-increase-us-supply-ventilators-and-respirators>
- ⁶ Coronavirus: FDA provides full OK for Battelle mask-sterilizing technology. (2020, March 30). Retrieved from <https://www.battelle.org/newsroom/news-details/coronavirus-fda-provides-full-ok-for-battelle-mask-sterilizing-technology>
- ⁷ There are no masks left in L.A. County's emergency stockpile. (2020, March 26). Retrieved from <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-03-25/coronavirus-healthcare-workers-masks-gowns-reuse>
- ⁸ Siegel, B. (2020, March 26). New York approves ventilator splitting, allowing hospitals to treat two patients with one machine. Retrieved from <https://abcnews.go.com/US/york-approves-ventilator-splitting-allowing-hospitals-treat-patients/story?id=69816167>
- ⁹ Ballhaus, R., & Restuccia, A. (2020, March 29). Manufacturers Seek U.S. Help in Deciding Where to Ship Scarce Medical Goods. Retrieved from https://www.wsj.com/articles/manufacturers-seek-u-s-help-in-deciding-where-to-ship-scarce-medical-goods-11585474201?utm_campaign=KHN: First Edition&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=85441504&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-8CY6Stsqjf25voT4wmaCPBsM2aVj8qalqksvwoeHJR9oXbaxOnPaQe2S5-Yb5i4C266bpYNiV5BlhB1vKtPBYagA0oEQ&_hsmi=85441504