

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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has established a supply-chain task force that is collaborating with private companies.<sup>4</sup> The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued emergency approval of the use of certain devices that can be converted into ventilators.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, FDA has allowed emergency use authorization of new sterilization techniques that allow for certain PPE to be reused.<sup>6</sup>

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.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

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 Legs 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

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- <sup>1</sup> 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/>
- <sup>2</sup> 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/>
- <sup>3</sup> 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](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)
- <sup>4</sup> 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>
- <sup>5</sup> (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>
- <sup>6</sup> 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>
- <sup>7</sup> 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>
- <sup>8</sup> 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>
- <sup>9</sup> 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](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)