

April 8, 2020

Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

The American Nurses Association appreciates your steps, on March 28th, to invoke the Defense Production Act (DPA) to expedite the production and delivery of critical personal protective equipment (PPE) to health workers battling on the front lines of this pandemic.

As part of ANA's ongoing efforts to update your Administration on developments around this pressing need, we wish to convey the increasing level of urgency on this vital matter from nurses across the country. With each passing day, we are hearing more reports of nurses and other health care workers on the frontlines in desperate need of this life-saving equipment. While equipment has been deployed in large numbers it is easy to underestimate the enormous quantity needed with the surge in patients being hospitalized. Even with the increased delivery of PPE such as N95 respirators, masks, gloves and gowns, hospitals are being conservative in its use in order to prepare for a surge in their own community. Around the country, hospital leaders are observing what is happening in New York and attempting to prepare if COVID-19 hits their community in a similar way. The unprecedented reuse of masks/respirators indicates that we are not giving our frontline providers what they need to practice safe infection control. We urge your Administration to utilize the full authority of the DPA to mobilize production of ventilators, masks, and other emergency medical supplies.

Collectively, we must do everything in our power, as a nation, to arm our frontline workforce with the resources and equipment necessary to do their jobs safely and effectively. Passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides critical funds for PPE and for ensuring the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) is maintained with medical supplies. We urge the Administration to leverage those funds as quickly as possible to aid in the production and delivery of PPE.

ANA also appreciates your Administration's efforts to establish the Supply Chain Stabilization Task Force, through the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) and the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS). We believe strongly that the sourcing and distribution of ventilators and PPE can be most efficiently coordinated at the federal level, at this moment. As the Task Force ramps up its work, please know ANA stands as a ready ally and resource in the pandemic response effort.

In addition to the availability of protective equipment, nurses are confronting a range of other challenges. Increasingly, ANA is hearing from nurses facing retaliation from employers when raising concerns about incidence of unnecessary risks to themselves or their patients. Nurses and other frontline providers have an obligation to point out problems and help solve them, rather than ignore them. We urge your Administration to put employee protections in place. We must empower health care providers to safe and effective care without fear of retribution.

Finally, ANA was pleased to hear that your Administration was exploring policy options surrounding hazard pay for frontline health workers. While nurses, health care providers, and first responders continue to answer the nation's call during this pandemic, we must also recognize the enormity of their sacrifice. We stand ready to work with your Administration and Congress to enact meaningful policy around hazard pay for nurses and other health workers.

Sincerely,



Debbie D. Hatmaker, PhD, RN, FAAN
Chief Nursing Officer / EVP

cc: Ernest Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN, ANA President
Loressa Cole, DNP, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE, ANA Chief Executive Officer