



## United States Senate

July 15, 2020

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

Given the worsening COVID-19 situation in California and across the country, I write to ask that you direct your administration to fully implement the *Defense Production Act* in order to address supply chain problems and increase the production and distribution of testing supplies, medical equipment, and personal protective equipment.

Despite early progress containing the disease, transmission of the virus is now surging across California. We have now had nearly 350,000 cases and more than 7,200 deaths, averaging nearly 8,900 new cases and 95 new deaths per day over the last week. Hospitalizations have also increased nearly 50 percent in the past two weeks with more than 6,300 people hospitalized as of Saturday, July 11. Unfortunately, several other states have seen similar, and in some cases worse, spread of the disease. For example, on Sunday, Florida reported over 15,000 new daily cases, surpassing the previous single-day high set by New York in April at about 12,000 cases.

I share your goal of reopening the economy as safely and as quickly as possible, but we must ensure that we do so in such a way that employers, workers, and consumers can be confident that their health is not being put at risk. The bottom line is that we need more testing supplies and we also need to bolster laboratories' capacity to process tests in a timely manner. While California is now able to conduct more than 100,000 COVID-19 tests per day, counties are starting to report shortages in supplies, resulting in testing sites closing or needing to prioritize testing to certain individuals. Many of our labs are also overwhelmed by the increased demand that accompanied the state's reopening. Other states have also reported shortages of supplies and overwhelmed testing labs, which hinders the ability to turn around results quickly. For example, Florida's testing labs have indicated that their turnaround time could be as long as 10 days. Ultimately, this further disrupts the safe reopening of schools, businesses, and the rest of our economy.

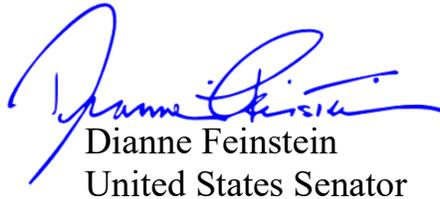
Invoking your authorities under the *Defense Production Act* to the fullest extent would help ensure that our country has the ability to expand testing to meet demand, process specimens in laboratories quickly, conduct contact tracing to reduce the spread of disease, and ensure hospitals are prepared to respond to any surge in patients.

Additionally, I ask you to issue a nationwide mandate to wear face coverings when in public. The United States added almost 200,000 new coronavirus cases over this past weekend with at least 35 states seeing a rise in new cases compared to last week. Evidence continues to grow that masks can help prevent transmission and that states with mask mandates saw a slowdown in new coronavirus cases after implementation. A recent Goldman Sachs Research analysis also reported that a national requirement to wear face coverings would increase the use of masks by 15% while lowering the rate of infections. The report further stated that such a requirement would save our nation \$1 trillion in Gross Domestic Product by enabling economic activity that would otherwise be lost due to continued business lockdowns.

Finally, I have attached a list of resources requested by the California Governor's office that California urgently needs in order to effectively respond to the rising number of new cases and hospitalizations in the state and reopen safely. I ask that you immediately provide this support, and I appreciate your expeditious attention to this request.

I recognize that this unprecedented public health crisis continues to be a challenge. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help you implement a strong federal response that matches the severity of this challenge.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

Enclosure: Request from the California Governor's office

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