April 14, 2020

The Honorable Michael R. Pence
Vice President of the United States
Eisenhower Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Mr. Vice President:

We support prioritizing the healthcare sector for COVID-19 testing supplies, and as testing becomes more available and abundant, the undersigned organizations urge the federal government to provide COVID-19 testing resources to U.S. employers that are engaged in essential business services. Increased access to COVID-19 testing for our workforce will help flatten the curve by removing people with coronavirus from the workplace and better ensure the safety and health of employees who are maintaining operations during this pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced workplaces across the U.S. to close or limit operations to protect public health and safety. As of April 1, 55 states and territories had some closures of non-essential businesses, and 28 states and territories have prohibited in-person workforces for non-essential businesses. However, states and territories have deemed some businesses and sectors as “essential,” and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has issued guidance on the essential critical infrastructure workforce.

Employees engaged in critical infrastructure and essential business are required to be at a physical worksite in some proximity to other employees and/or customers. We have a responsibility to ensure that they can perform their work in a safe environment, and access to testing would help us do so.

We are especially concerned by reports that as many as 25% of people infected with COVID-19 may not show any symptoms but can still spread the disease. A lack of easily accessible COVID-19 testing means that some of our employees may unknowingly be coming to work and spreading the disease to their co-workers and the public.

We share your goals to keep our family, friends, neighbors and colleagues safe and healthy while allowing essential services to continue operation. Therefore, we ask for your help by providing access to testing and timely results for our employees.

Sincerely,

AES Corporation
American Association on Health and Disability
American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA)
American Public Gas Association
American Staffing Association
American Sugar Alliance
American Trucking Associations
Arizona Chapter National Safety Council
Association of American Railroads
Association of Energy Service Companies
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Board of Certified Safety Professionals

1 https://www.nga.org/coronavirus
2 Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Guam, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma (in counties with reported community spread), Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Vermont, Virgin Islands, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin
CC:
The Honorable Alex M. Azar II, Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
The Honorable Chad F. Wolf, Acting Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
The Honorable Peter T. Gaynor, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency