



**American Board
of Medical Specialties**

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American Board of Medical Specialties

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Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), its 24 Member Boards and the more than 900,000 board certified physicians we certify, we want to thank you and members of the administration for all you are doing to combat the new Coronavirus 19 (COVID-19) pandemic. We write to you, and members of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, about a matter of the utmost urgency – the procurement and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE). As our nation faces this devastating public health care challenge in combating the COVID-19 virus, our health care workers are on the frontline daily, risking their personal health and safety, and that of their families, desperately trying to save the lives of their patients and those living in their communities.

As the leading not-for-profit organization overseeing physician certification in the United States, ABMS supports 24 Member Boards that develop educational and professional standards and programs of assessment to certify physician specialists in 40 specialties and 87 subspecialties. We are dedicated to improving the quality of care delivered to patients, families and communities across the country. Our duty to physicians and their clinical colleagues compels us to implore you and the COVID-19 Task Force to support the critical role that PPE plays not only in keeping clinicians safe but in preventing the further spread of the disease. That clinicians are forced to use substandard PPE, reuse and recycle old PPE and in some cases, treat their patients without PPE, is dangerous for them and for their patients.

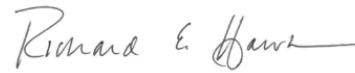
We commend you for invoking the Defense Production Act, allowing manufacturers to begin retrofitting for the mass fabrication of the required PPE, vital testing kits, and other equipment (including face shields, masks, coveralls, powered respirator systems, gloves, and mechanical ventilators), as well as releasing the inventory of these essential items from the Strategic National Stockpile. However, we recognize that even these efforts will not meet the growing, immediate need to supply sufficient PPE that meets the required and necessary OSHA standard of safe protection (29 CFR 1910 Subpart I App B).

We, together with our fellow medical and health care organizations, strongly urge you, Mr. President, to immediately use the full array of your executive powers, including those described in the Defense Production Act, to accelerate the production and procurement of adequate PPE, including from foreign countries, as well as strategically deploy PPE to areas of greatest need. Our nation's health care professionals and first responders, across all states and territories, deserve our most ardent support and efforts to protect them as they risk their lives to treat and protect us.

Most respectfully,



Barry S. Smith, MD
Chair, ABMS Board of Directors



Richard E. Hawkins, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer