

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

March 25, 2020

The Honorable Peter Gaynor  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Federal Center Plaza  
500 C St. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Gaynor:

We write to you in full support of Governor Jay Inslee's request of 1,000 ventilators from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) to be used for Washington state's COVID-19 response. We understand that 500 ventilators have been approved, and that 500 more will be sent if the state determines the additional resources are needed. We urge that the initial 500 ventilators be delivered to Washington expeditiously. This request is of the utmost urgency as Washington state has disproportionately fewer ventilators and disproportionately more COVID-19 cases than the rest of nation.

The most recent data from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the American Association for Respiratory Care found that Washington has fewer than 13 ventilators per 100,000 people. Comparatively, the state median number of ventilators per 100,000 people is 20.5.

The number of ventilators is roughly equivalent to the number of intensive care unit (ICU) beds, and when Washington's capacity is compared to other COVID-19 stricken nations, the figures display a potentially grim scenario for our state. Italy, which has the highest number of deaths from COVID-19, has 12.5 ICU beds per 100,000 people. We are seeing reports that due to the limited number of ventilators and overwhelming number of patients, physicians in Italy are forced to make the impossible choice of deciding which patients are more deserving of being saved.

Our hospitals across the region are growing more concerned that they could share the same trajectory as Italy and that in a short time the hospitals will be overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients as intensive care unit capacity is reached. We are alarmed by the parallels between Italy and Washington state and we implore you to act expeditiously to fulfill Governor Inslee's request and immediately disburse ventilators from the SNS.

We also appreciate the Request for Information on ventilator manufacturing put out by HHS on March 21, 2020. We are hopeful that this information can be used to establish a national ventilator strategy. Such a strategy should include a national production goal and allocation plan coordinated by the federal government. This will require strategic coordination to guarantee that every region of the country has the ventilators it needs as the virus spreads throughout our nation.

We thank you for your commitment to meet Washington state's need for more ventilators and remind you that hospitals across the state have already prepared crisis care standards to manage the impending wave of COVID-19 patients. The federal response will be deemed a success or failure based on whether those crisis care standards are implemented.

Sincerely,



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Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress



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Patty Murray  
United States Senator



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Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



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Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress



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Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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Dan Newhouse  
Member of Congress



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Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress



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Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



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Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



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Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress

*Denny Heck*

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Denny Heck  
Member of Congress

*Jaime Herrera Beutler*

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Jaime Herrera Beutler  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Mike Pence, Vice President, United States of America  
The Honorable Mark Esper, Secretary of Defense  
The Honorable Alex Azar, Secretary of Health and Human Services