

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2020

Administrator Peter T. Gaynor
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Gaynor:

As members of the New York congressional delegation, we write to urgently request the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to give full and complete transparency in its procurement and distribution of ventilators to states and to establish a centralized system to procure resources and distribute them to areas of greatest needs.

The epicenter of this unprecedented public health crisis is right in the State of New York. The skyrocketing cases of COVID-19 in New York State, currently at over 130,000 cases, are forcing our hospitals to operate beyond their normal capacity with limited resources, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), ventilators, and staff. We have been warned that more than half of New Yorkers will be infected with COVID-19 and we fear that lives will be needlessly lost due to insufficient and misallocation of resources.

New York State officials estimated that in less than a week's time, hospitals in New York will not have enough ventilators and as a result, would have to make the harrowing decision of which patients do not get ventilators, essentially giving them a death sentence. One less ventilator is one less life that had the hope of being saved, and every life is worth saving.

Centralized Purchasing and Procurement System

A national structure to effectively procure critical resources, such as PPE, ventilators, staff, and medication, for states does not exist. As a result, the federal government and states are at bidding wars, competing to acquire the same products from the same manufacturers, distributors, and global markets. Further, adding insult to injury, the federal government then sends it to the commercial market, forcing states to buy and compete for the same products yet again. Not only is this a waste of government funds, this is a waste of time, time which many do not have. As such, we urge FEMA to establish a centralized system where purchasing and procuring critical resources is solely conducted by the federal government and then distributed directly to states, eliminating the commercial system and any need for intermediaries.

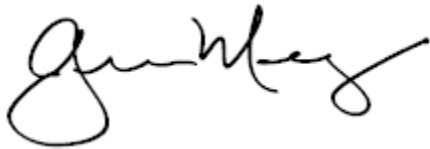
Transparency of Supply Distribution

The methodology used to determine how and where supplies, including ventilators, are distributed must be transparent. There should be no confusion on where supplies are going and what volume are to be expected. We urge FEMA to be transparent on its distribution

methodology to give states and the American people confidence that the federal government is and will continue to distribute critical resources to areas of the greatest needs and in the hour of need.

We look to FEMA to help protect and save the American people from COVID-19. With COVID-19, ventilators are our lifelines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grace Meng', with a stylized, flowing script.

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

/s/ Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

/s/ Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

/s/ Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

/s/ Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress

/s/ Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress

/s/ Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress

/s/ Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

/s/ Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

/s/ Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress

/s/ José E. Serrano
Member of Congress

/s/ Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

/s/ Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

/s/ Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

/s/ Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress