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March 23, 2020

The President

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As the directors of 97 leading academic cancer centers in the U.S., we are responsible for treating a particularly vulnerable patient population. Many of our patients are immunosuppressed, and most have serious co-morbidities. Consequently, they are particularly susceptible to having serious complications and poor outcomes from SARS-CoV2 infection (which causes COVID-19). In fact, some of our patients have already contracted this virus and died from respiratory failure. Furthermore, our patients generally require frequent interactions with health care providers, who are being increasingly affected themselves with COVID-19 or are being seconded to assist in the treatment of COVID-19 patients. Our physicians and advanced practice personnel are witnessing firsthand the increasing strain on our healthcare systems, most notably the widespread shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), such as surgical and N95 masks, gowns, nasal swabs, and face shields, as well as advanced life support systems, such as ventilators and ECMO devices. In a word, the situation is already desperate in many of our hospitals, and rapidly edging towards utter disaster.

**For this reason, we implore you to immediately invoke and utilize the Defense Production Act to marshal the power of American manufacturing to address the COVID-19 emergency. We also request that you mobilize units of our military, such as the Army Corps of Engineers to aid in rapid construction of temporary hospital facilities and military medical personnel to assist and relieve our front-line emergency room and intensive care unit personnel.**

The full scope of this emergency is only beginning to be apparent, but it is already clear that there is not a second to lose. Failure to act decisively and immediately will undoubtedly result in the tragic, massive, and ultimately avoidable loss of many American lives.

Thank you very much for considering our request.

Most respectfully,

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