



The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

31 March 2020

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of Amnesty International USA,¹ I write to urge your administration to take immediate action to ensure everyone who requests access to testing can receive it in order to effectively track and prevent the spread of COVID-19, and to ensure our frontline medical care providers, other essential service providers, and first responders have everything they need to save lives and ensure their safety.

As an organization dedicated to human rights, we know that the right to health means we must do everything we can to ensure that access to care is available, accessible, and of good quality for all persons. As we have seen, certain groups - including people with pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease - appear to be at greater risk of exposure to COVID-19 and subsequent severe illness and death. Further, people with disabilities, people living with critical medical conditions, people living in poverty, the elderly, and communities with chronically under-resourced facilities are also disproportionately impacted. We are also greatly concerned that the U.S.' health care workers and other frontline responders, and those who are marginalized and at greater risk, will be disproportionately affected for something which can be addressed by the U.S. Federal Government: a lack of testing, personal protective equipment (PPE), ventilators, and other vital healthcare equipment.

Health care workers and other frontline responders are at the frontline of this epidemic, continuing to deliver services despite the personal risks to themselves and their families. The risks they face include contracting COVID-19 while doing their jobs, long working hours, psychological distress, and fatigue. The United States government must ensure adequate and quality PPE, information, training, and psychosocial

¹ A Nobel Prize-winning global movement of more than eight million people worldwide campaigning to promote human rights, Amnesty International calls on all governments and other actors involved to ensure that all responses to the COVID-19 outbreak are in compliance with international human rights law and standards, taking into account the specific needs of marginalized groups and people and those most at risk, and that the specific human rights risks associated with any particular response are addressed and mitigated. Amnesty International USA is the movement's U.S.-based section with more than one million activists, supporters, and members.

support are available to support nurses, doctors, and other response staff in these critical days and weeks.

Further, we urgently need more testing to effectively track and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Until there is widespread testing available in every state, we will not fully know the full scale of this pandemic in the United States and not be able to take the necessary steps needed to limit and stop its spread. The United States must rapidly expand testing in every state and territory.

We urge you to:

- Use every option available, including further invoking the Defense Production Act (DPA) and using the Strategic National Stockpile, to increase the production of personal protective equipment, ventilators, and other vital healthcare equipment.
- Do everything your administration can to ensure that any goods and services necessary to ensure prevention of exposure are widely available and affordable for all persons, including those most at risk of exposure and the most vulnerable populations.
- Drastically increase testing for COVID-19 in every state and territory to ensure we are doing everything possible to limit and stop its spread.

At this time of great uncertainty, we call on the Administration to protect the human rights to health, safety and security of all people by doing everything it can to limit the spread of COVID-19 and providing our frontline medical service providers what they need to save lives, and protect their own.

Respectfully,



Margaret Huang
Executive Director

Cc: Vice President Mike Pence
Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar
Coronavirus Response Coordinator Dr. Deborah Birx