

**PRESIDENT & CEO**

Joshua Bolten  
*Business Roundtable*

March 19, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for all that you and your Administration are doing to combat the coronavirus pandemic. This public health crisis brings with it an economic crisis, and we appreciate the work of your Administration to tackle both challenges.

As you told Business Roundtable CEOs, limiting the health impact of the virus is the most important thing that can be done to help restore the economy to normal. We agree. Our companies are following the guidance of CDC and local health authorities for reducing the potential for transmission, including by having our employees work from home, when possible, and ensuring best health practices, such as “social distancing”. We know that much non-essential work will need to stop while the virus is contained.

As state and local public health officials implement varying, and sometimes conflicting, limitations on business critical operations and essential consumer functions, the federal government can help by issuing practical guidance to state and local authorities to ensure essential infrastructure and services continue to operate throughout the duration of the outbreak. In many cases, the infrastructure and services we all rely on are backed up by supply chains, distribution and support systems that may not be apparent to local policymakers who are trying to do what is best for their citizens. Yet all of these systems are critical to keeping essential infrastructure and services operating.

Essential infrastructure and services include activities necessary for combatting the present public health crisis as well as the functions that supply day-to-day necessities for Americans who are waiting out this crisis at home. Many of our members are involved in these critical support functions including providing food and medicine, healthcare services and supplies, financial and banking services, critical telecommunication and technology services, and power for American homes and businesses. Others are engaged in activities that are less visible, but directly support these critical functions.

Categories of essential infrastructure and services include:

- Medical/Health Care
- Food and Agriculture
- Household Consumer Products
- Law Enforcement
- Communications and Information Technology (including services and components)
- Transportation and Logistics (including parts and repair)
- Energy
- Water and Wastewater
- Waste Management and Recycling
- Financial Services and Insurance
- National Security

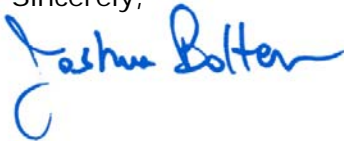
Many of these systems support one another and rely upon complex supply chains to function and deliver essential products and services. For example, hospitals and power plants both require communications and IT support. Other systems have multi-layered supply chains connecting businesses large and small to make essential products – for example sanitizing products require chemical inputs that must be packaged, containerized, transported and delivered to manufacturing facilities to make the end product, before they are distributed and delivered to stores across America.

Many states and localities are considering adopting their own protocols, but there is a lack of consistent direction in how businesses, essential operations, supply chains, and personnel should continue to operate under such orders. Guidance from the federal government could help harmonize these orders so that essential infrastructure and services continue to operate nationwide for the benefit of all Americans during this unprecedented time. As one example of a thoughtful approach to these issues, Santa Clara County recently instituted policies to keep citizens safe while also ensuring that certain essential infrastructure, supply chains and products support the health crisis response and support families in their homes. Yet even in this case, further clarification was required as government was not fully aware of all the critical business operations in the area.

We would appreciate the opportunity for regular consultation on this issue as it evolves over the coming weeks. We greatly appreciate your efforts with the Governors and your Administration's work with State and Local governments to align efforts.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Joshua Bolten  
President & CEO, Business Roundtable