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## **Open Letter: Congress Should Reauthorize PAHPA to Strengthen America's Domestic PPE Supply Chain**

December 2023

We write to ask Congress to ensure the U.S. Government keeps its commitment to build a sustainable domestic manufacturing base for personal protective equipment (PPE) and to reauthorize the bipartisan Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA).

The U.S. Government made a roughly \$1 billion down payment to bolster domestic PPE manufacturing capacity during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The effort must continue so that American PPE supply chains, pandemic preparedness, and thousands of good-paying, American manufacturing jobs are not imperiled.

Before COVID-19, China was a dominant supplier of PPE and its raw materials. During the pandemic, China used unfair trade practices to further increase its global share of critical PPE manufacturing. China now controls greater than fifty percent of the world's supply of nitrile gloves, respirators, and gowns. A painful lesson from the COVID-19 pandemic was that PPE shortages and dependence on foreign nations for critical supplies was a glaring vulnerability.

In response to COVID-19, the U.S. took steps to protect against this vulnerability by creating a domestic PPE supply chain option. PAHPA created agencies such as ASPR that are on the front lines of making sure that the U.S. has reliable access to these critical supplies. We must maintain this commitment and focus.

The U.S. Government had it right at the start of the pandemic. The lack of a reliable and scalable domestic PPE supply chain can result in harm to both public health and the economy. PPE shortages endangered American healthcare workers and our brave emergency responders. It costs lives. Shortages of gloves, gowns, respirators, and masks due to inadequate stocks, supply chain vulnerabilities, and import disruptions hampered crucial services during the pandemic. For the US to effectively respond to and defend itself against future pandemics, we must complete and sustain the domestic PPE manufacturing infrastructure projects that began during the last pandemic.

With bipartisan courage, cooperation, and patriotism, Congress and the Administration can invest in public health and national security, safer conditions for healthcare workers, first responders, and everyday Americans, and build a more resilient economy.

As American medical manufacturers, we call on Congress to reauthorize PAHPA.

