



Jay Timmons
President and CEO

January 19, 2021

The Honorable Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston
1 City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mayor Walsh:

Congratulations on your nomination to serve in President-elect Biden's cabinet. Manufacturers look forward to working with you in your new role to support the manufacturing workforce. As our nation continues to battle the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and begins administering vaccines, manufacturers' highest priority remains the health and safety of their teams, families and communities. Manufacturers are going above and beyond guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to provide workers with facilities free from hazards and safeguard their operations.

As the new administration examines the federal government's actions to protect workers, the National Association of Manufacturers believes it is important that the Department of Labor and OSHA provide employers with thorough and timely information on how COVID-19 spreads and what can be implemented at manufacturing facilities to safeguard employees. As more is learned about COVID-19 and its transmission, it is critical that the federal government continue to issue regular and updated guidance on employers' critical role in protecting employees in this ever-changing environment.

A collaborative approach between manufacturers and your department will best support worker health and safety during the pandemic. Sweeping standards that do not provide the opportunity for robust public comment could slow America's ability to manufacture vaccines, therapeutics, personal protective equipment and other essential supplies. Mandates that do not recognize the differences of workplaces may cause disruptions in the pandemic response and discourage innovation in workplace health and safety. Any new COVID-19 testing requirements placed on manufacturing operations could create larger access and supply challenges, potentially costing jobs and inflicting economic harm and uncertainty during the pandemic.

Manufacturers will always comply with health and safety requirements and go above and beyond to protect our teams' health and wellbeing. Since March, manufacturers have innovated and made significant changes to operations to keep each unique workplace safe, including providing paid leave, retooling production lines, installing life-saving equipment and training workers on proper defenses against COVID-19. The NAM has also launched public service announcements promoting face coverings and a "Creators Respond Commitment" that allows manufacturing workers to commit to safe practices. Our members are using both tools to promote responsible behaviors.

Because every manufacturing facility is unique, flexibility is key for individual companies and work sites to successfully implement health officials' recommended measures to reduce the

risk of spread. These investments come at significant costs but represent important ethical business decisions to protect workers and communities. With these actions in mind, manufacturers request assurances that any new safety rules take into account the rapidly changing dynamics of COVID-19 and allow for manufacturers' feedback and the continuous improvement of workplace health and safety measures based on the most current science.

The manufacturing industry will continue to lead America's recovery for the duration and after the pandemic, focusing our efforts on delivering the products households and first responders need while safely creating jobs and protecting our teams. Our industry is critical to ensuring economic prosperity now and in the future. The men and women of manufacturing are committed to working with you to ensure safe workplaces and bring about America's long-term renewal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Timmons", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jay Timmons

cc: Jeff Zients, Coordinator of the COVID-19 Response and Counselor to the President-elect