



Dirk Van Dongen
President & CEO

March 25, 2020

The Vice President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

NAW continues to stand ready to assist the Administration as it addresses unprecedented challenges in responding to COVID-19. We particularly commend the President's and your leadership on the March 17, 2020 call with executives of key members of our industry.

Your commitment to ensuring that the distribution industry can effectively assist in the recovery efforts was fully and clearly demonstrated in the CISA Guidelines designating distribution company employees as essential.

Our members are likewise fully committed to helping America's industry return to full operation.

Many of them are participating in White House led Task Force Groups.

Several companies have expressed to us serious concern about the efficiency and effectiveness of the apparent approach for getting critical products to where they are needed. Rather than engaging established supply chains, the direction appears to be to create a process where manufacturers are asked to send product directly to the end-user. While this approach may seem to have significant appeal, it is superficial. In practice, ignoring existing private sector distribution networks is unworkable and will slow the delivery of products significantly.

The commercial supply chain relies on warehouses, transport and delivery resources directed and managed by companies who have deep relationships with private, public and government facilities now in need of a range of products and commodities. Facilities rely on these integrated systems to determine where product is needed, specifically where it is delivered and when it must be replenished. Each distributor knows the individuals responsible at a facility and are best able to respond to changing challenges. Mandating that a manufacturer, distant from the facility in need, may work in the abstract, but is highly unlikely to result in products being delivered when and where they are needed.

There is a reason that some \$6 trillion dollars of goods and commodities move through wholesale distribution channels each year. It is because this is the most efficient way of moving product from where it is made to where it is needed.

NAW urges that during this critical time, the efficiencies of those who best know distribution be relied upon to expedite and assure delivery of critical product.

We are willing to discuss this further with members of your team as you deem it helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dirk Van Dongen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dirk Van Dongen
President & CEO