

ABBY FINKENAUER
1ST DISTRICT, IOWA

124 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2911

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4606

March 19, 2020

Robert Redfield, M.D.
Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
1600 Clifton Road Northeast
Atlanta, Georgia 30329

Robert Kadlec, M.D., MTM&H, M.S.
Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 638G
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Redfield and Dr. Kadlec,

I write to express our ongoing concern for our health care providers in Iowa, who have reported impending shortages of medical supplies, namely personal protective equipment (PPE). While I understand that the state received gowns, gloves, and masks from the National Strategic Stockpile, I have heard from state public health authorities that some supplies sent to them by the federal government have been expired—dating back to the H1N1 outbreak. With shortages of PPE now top concern for our local health systems, I worry that much more may be needed to improve the capacity of our local health care infrastructure in Iowa.

With documented cases of community spread of COVID-19, our health systems must be prepared to provide services to as many Iowans as possible and a lack of basic medical supplies puts patients—and providers—at risk. I am hopeful that your decision to invoke the Defense Production Act will prevent shortages in the long-term and I urge you to take all steps necessary to strengthen the Strategic National Stockpile. I understand that you are currently developing formal guidance that will allow states to request supplies through ASPR, I urge you to finalize these processes immediately to provide a reliable resource for Iowa and other states facing shortages of PPE and other supplies.

I also ask that you share information on all federal resources that may be used to help states or health systems procure medical supplies in the event of a public health emergency. To that end, I hope you will clarify the recent guidance on the allowable uses of funding awarded to our states, tribes, and territories under the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act. This information will help put our office in the best possible position to connect

providers with the equipment and supplies they need, especially as they prepare for surge capacity.

We are at the point where we must take every precaution to prevent against further transmission and protect our health care workforce. Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Abby Finkenauer', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Abby Finkenauer
Member of Congress