



March 20, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders McConnell, McCarthy and Schumer:

The Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) represents more than 320 companies of all sizes from across the aerospace and defense (A&D) sector. Our 2.4 million employees represent nearly 20 percent of the nation's manufacturing workforce, powering America's economy and providing critical capabilities to our warfighters—many of whom are still deployed. In fact, few industries are more inextricably linked to our nation's continued success and global competitiveness than aerospace and defense.

As a result of COVID-19, the aerospace and defense industry is under severe financial and operating pressure that worsens with each passing day. In particular, our nation depends on the large network of small businesses that make up the supply chain for aircraft manufacturing, general aviation, commercial and military space systems, and defense weapon systems. Much of our supply chain, large and small, will not have the resources to weather the current emergency without near-term federal support.

We are asking our nation's leaders to consider three key proposals to help protect our workforce and ensure our industry is able to maintain operations in this crisis:

"Essential" Designation: To support the continuation of critical national security work, our industry needs legislation or direction to the Administration, including relevant elements of the Department of Defense, mandating the designation of mission essential national security work by industrial base partners as "essential" for the purpose of gaining exemptions from state and local orders;

Enhanced Cash Flow: All companies within the supply chain – and especially small companies – need liquidity to navigate through the crisis. Temporary injection of public and private investment into the system to help mitigate reduced cash flow and financial burdens stemming from the COVID-19 crisis is critical; and

Contract Flexibility: Our industry needs clear and consistent guidance for all federal contracts to help accelerate payments, obligations, and contract awards while facilitating the flowdown of resources to subcontractors and vendors which often need resources most urgently.

We believe these initiatives will help stabilize A&D manufacturers during the current emergency and allow our workforce to continue supporting the U. S. economy and our nation's military. Thank you for considering these requests as you develop legislation in such challenging times, and please contact us if you need further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Eric Fanning', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Eric Fanning
President & CEO
AIA