



Vermont Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals, Local 5221
Porter Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals, Local 5753
Brattleboro Federation of Nurses, Local 5064

April 6, 2020

The Honorable Phil Scott
Governor, State of Vermont
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT

Dear Governor Scott:

As nurses and health care workers at the University of Vermont Medical Center, Porter Medical Center and Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, we care deeply for our patients and take pride in the roles we play on the front lines of patient care. As our healthcare system here in Vermont braces for the COVID-19 outbreak, it is imperative that our health care workforce is protected.

The national shortage of Personal Protective Equipment, or PPE, is of profound concern for patient and staff safety. Our health care professionals get exposed to high levels of the virus, and our only safeguard lies in our access to PPE. We are incredibly distressed to witness our Federal government's response to a lack of supplies by the easing of safety protocols rather than the urgent ramp-up of our manufacturing capacity to meet the demand.

As representatives of Vermont's health care workforce, our specific requests to your office include:

- Expand State funding for the purchase of PPE.
- Direct all Vermont businesses who have a current supply of PPE to turn over their inventory to the Vermont Emergency Management Office, who will then distribute to our local healthcare facilities in need. For example; food service, nail salons, construction and trades, tattoo parlors, etc. The State of Vermont will reimburse these local businesses for their inventory at cost.
- Direct all Vermont business who have manufacturing capabilities to convert or expand their abilities to produce PPE
- Issue guidance for manufacturing based on the highest level of protection for our patients and staff, which we define as N95 masks, PAPR (powered air-purifying respirator), procedural masks, coveralls meeting ASTM (American Standard for Testing and Materials) standard, disposable full-face shields, goggles, gloves and any, all other PPE deemed necessary by the CDC.

- Transparency on PPE supply levels in the State's inventory, along with supply levels and usage cross each health care facility here in Vermont.

As our COVID-19 cases continue to climb here in Vermont, we must make preparations to increase our supply of PPE with the urgency of national security in mind. Our health care system will collapse if a large number of us fall sick as a result of inadequate PPE. As a State, we must take swift measures and act boldly to protect our front-line medical workforce.

We ask for your full and unwavering commitment to protecting our lives as we work around the clock to provide the safest quality of care to our patients.

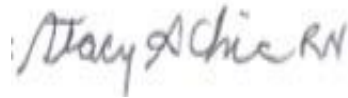
Sincerely,



Deb Snell, RN CCRN
President, AFT-VT
President, VFNHP



Mary Wood, RN
President, PFNHP



Stacy Chickering, RN
President, BFN