



# State of Connecticut

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April 22, 2020

Governor Ned Lamont  
Office of the Governor  
210 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Lamont:

I am deeply concerned about the state's policies guiding the purchasing of personal protective equipment (PPE). I have previously expressed these concerns to you and your administration, and I remain increasingly concerned about this issue as the pandemic progresses. I implore you again to reconsider your PPE purchasing policy, especially given the continued shortfall of supplies in our most vulnerable facilities and as nursing homes experience a tragic and shocking number of coronavirus related deaths.

We know Connecticut has missed out on purchasing very large supplies of PPE as a result of our state's refusal to pay for the supplies upfront. In multiple situations, Connecticut has asked suppliers to ship supplies to Connecticut first and then receive payment multiple days after receipt. Suppliers have rejected this policy and moved on to supply equipment to other states which did not take issue with paying for the supplies before receiving them. It worried me greatly that Connecticut seemed to have adopted a policy that put us at a disadvantage with other states for the purchase of PPE, and as a result we missed out on opportunities to obtain large amounts of PPE early on in the pandemic. I understand the fear is that the state could fall prey to a bad actor that does not deliver the materials promised, but the remedy is simple. The state needs to use due diligence to consider a supplier, see what other states they have provided supplies to and ask those states about their experience. We can put a cap on how much we spend with suppliers for an initial purchase, and then increase that amount once we know they are a reliable source. If even after these measures are in place we do experience an issue with one supplier, we will have saved lives with the PPE we have received as a result of adopting policies that keep us in line with other states and don't put us at a disadvantage. There are many ways to address the concerns, but just saying no to suppliers who are helping other states is not the right balance.

Since our conversations last month, my concerns have grown significantly as coronavirus has spread through our state, and we are now beginning to obtain numbers on how many people in the state's nursing home facilities have been infected and died of the virus as PPE shortages continue to be reported by nursing home workers.

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Nursing home workers continue to report that they do not have the amount of PPE that they need. They are facing shortages that have workers and care facilities extremely worried. I understand their concern as more than half of all coronavirus-related deaths in Connecticut involve nursing home residents.

This problem will be exacerbated even more by your recent order requiring face coverings by the public. This additional demand on PPE supplies will result in added pressures in obtaining PPE for our nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities.

Connecticut has gone above and beyond to flatten the curve and limit social interaction, much of which has been successful. But these sacrifices come at a cost in other areas, as we have spoken about in detail. Connecticut is not only facing a public health crisis, but now also an economic crisis, a mental health crisis, and a social crisis. Families continue to sacrifice every day to protect the general public. But Connecticut continues to have a serious issue amongst our most vulnerable population and PPE supplies remain a concern just as they did on day one. While the state has been so heavily focused on restricting public interaction through business closures and limits on social gatherings, we need more attention on vulnerable populations specifically. PPE must be a major part of that discussion.

With deaths in Connecticut's nursing homes at such shocking and heartbreaking levels, at the same time that access to PPE supplies remains an issue, Connecticut needs to take bold action. I again ask that you reconsider how your administration manages its purchasing of PPE. We must make sure the people who care for our most vulnerable populations have all the tools they need to protect people to the maximum potential.

Sincerely,



Len Fasano  
Senate Republican Leader

cc: Paul Mounds, Chief of Staff