

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20510**

April 20, 2020

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

In the past month, more than 300,000 Wisconsinites have filed for unemployment.<sup>1</sup> Demands for food assistance have doubled.<sup>2</sup> Thousands of businesses have shut their doors. The number of positive cases of COVID-19 has grown. Wisconsin needs what has been lacking from the “*Whole of America*” response to this pandemic – strong leadership from this White House that provides a national, centralized plan to conduct widespread testing.

In Wisconsin we have a work ethic that is second to none, and our workers want to get back on the job just as our businesses want to safely reopen. However, we all know that the path forward must be guided by putting science and public health first. At present, no national plan exists from your White House to provide our state with the resources and supplies we need to conduct widespread testing to identify those who are infected, isolate positive cases, and safely trace all contacts so the spread of this virus can be contained.

Conditions in Wisconsin are not unique. Governors across the country continue to issue public pleas for the critical medical supplies needed to conduct widespread testing, including personal protective equipment (PPE), swabs, and reagents. In fact, as our health care workers and first responders lack the PPE they need to safely do their jobs, it has been reported that 1,000 N95 masks ordered by the Brown County Sheriff’s Department and the Green Bay Police Department were intercepted by FEMA and taken away from us.<sup>3</sup> This undermines our efforts to respond to this pandemic, and there is now an explosion of COVID-19 cases in the Green Bay area, with the number of cases in Brown County having increased more than fourfold in just 10 days.<sup>4</sup>

The Administration recently notified the state that from April 5-18, certain supplies had been shipped to private vendors, not directly to the State of Wisconsin, local governments or health

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2020/04/14/wisconsinites-filed-unemployment-still-await-state-federal-help/2981242001/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wpr.org/demand-food-assistance-doubles-wisconsin-amid-coronavirus-economic-slump>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/story/news/2020/04/10/coronavirus-brown-county-federal-agency-snags-face-masks-meant-police/5121847002/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/2020/04/17/brown-county-coronavirus-spike-cdc-wisconsin-investigate-cases/5156523002/>

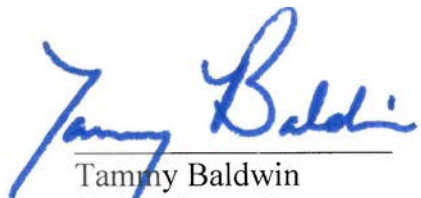
care providers. In addition, all numbers were provided by private sector medical distributors back to FEMA, with no transparency or clarity about the final destination of these supplies, and we have heard reports of continued potential diversions. Furthermore, as Wisconsin still lacks the supplies needed from the federal government to scale up testing, this notification provides no information on additional testing supplies requested from FEMA.

During a national emergency, you have pitted states against one another to bid on critical supplies needed for testing, and your administration has diverted shipments away from governors and into the hands of a small group of private distributors with no transparency. You have undermined states' requests for assistance, supplanting decades of tried and true emergency management structures with empty promises and outright falsehoods about the delivery of medical supplies to our state and others. The result has been chaos and a complete failure to manage our Strategic National Stockpile and the medical supply chain, which has left states without the federal assistance and supplies they need to conduct more testing and combat this virus.


In order to put people back to work and reopen businesses, we need your Administration to step up and provide Wisconsin with the guidance, supplies, and PPE we need to conduct widespread testing. You can accomplish this by doing something you have failed to do – using your Presidential authority to unlock the full power of the Defense Production Act to support a robust national testing strategy so that the United States can massively scale up production of the testing supplies and PPE our health care workers need to protect themselves, take care of patients, and save lives.

Without broad-based testing, we are left in the dark. Experts have suggested that we need at least 500,000 tests per day to begin reopening parts of the economy by mid-May.<sup>5</sup> On April 19, 2020, Vice President Pence stated that the United States was conducting approximately 150,000 tests per day.<sup>6</sup> This is unacceptable. Liberating our country from this pandemic and moving our economy forward requires you to lead with a national testing plan and the supplies to implement it. This public health and economic crisis demands leadership from the White House, and Wisconsin families and businesses are waiting on you to provide it.

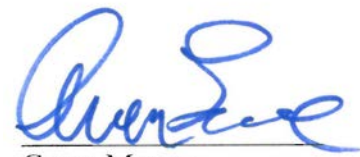
Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/17/us/coronavirus-testing-states.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://abc7news.com/politics/pence-says-us-conducts-150000-covid-19-tests-daily/6115002/>