

March 25, 2020

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor, State of Maryland
Chair
National Governors Association

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor, State of New York
Vice Chair
National Governors Association

Dear Governors Hogan and Cuomo,

Our members' companies are responsible for residential construction in the United States. They build and repair homes, townhomes, and condominiums and make and install products that are used to build them. We urge states instituting work restrictions to combat the COVID-19 pandemic to designate residential construction workers, installation contractors, manufacturers, and local planning and building inspectors as "essential critical infrastructure workers." This designation will allow the industry to continue to safely operate during this downturn and will allow us to lead a recovery in the days ahead.

The homebuilding industry is a catalyst to help the economy emerge from economic downturns. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic is a shock to the system, but when we begin to focus on restarting the economy, construction can lead the way if we are able to maintain operations throughout the current response. If we idle construction sites, lay off construction trades, and stop the manufacture of homebuilding products, it will take months to bring this industry back to life.

For our industry, worker safety is the first priority, and we are well suited to adopt the specific additional safety measures called for in response to this health crisis. We can comply with social distancing and are able to limit the number of workers on a jobsite. Homebuilders can restrict jobsite access to one trade at a time. These measures keep carpenters, drywall hangers, painters, plumbers, roofers, insulation contractors, and others employed and safe during this COVID-19 response. Moreover, it allows us to ramp up quickly when we're ready to reopen the economy again.

Government functions related to the building and development process, such as inspections, permitting, and plan review services can be modified to protect the public health but need to continue and serve the construction of housing.

Most regions of the U.S. are now in the height of storm season. As we have seen recently in Ohio, Tennessee, and Nevada, hail, high winds, tornados and earthquakes will create critical spikes in demand for our services and products. It is critical our industry is up and operational in order to maintain the infrastructure that will be necessary to address the current health crisis.

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
March 25, 2020
Page 2

As this nation's Governors take action to protect their citizenry, we ask that they recognize residential construction, its trades, manufacturing, and permitting as essential activities that can proceed without restriction and without threat to public safety.

Sincerely,

Air Conditioning Contractors of America
Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute
American Coatings Association
American Wood Council
APA – The Engineered Wood Association
Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association
Cellulose Insulation Manufacturers Association
EPS Industry Alliance
Extruded Polystyrene Foam Association
Insulate America
Insulation Contractors Association of America
Leading Builders of America
Metal Construction Association
National Association of Homebuilders
National Lumber and Building Materials Dealers
National Roofing Contractors Association
North American Insulation Manufacturers Association
Plumbing Manufacturers International
Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association
Structural Insulated Panel Association
Vinyl Institute
Vinyl Siding Institute
Window and Door Manufacturers Association

cc: Honorable Chad F. Wolf, Acting Secretary of Homeland Security