

## **Food Critical Infrastructure Group**

May 26, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pence  
Vice President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

Thank you for your leadership in the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We write to ask your help in ensuring the businesses we represent have clear guidance to provide work environments that are safe for employees, guests, and customers. Only with confidence that they are providing such an environment can they continue to provide the essentials of life – food – to all Americans.

After first responders and health care providers, food workers fulfill the most important societal function during a national emergency: feeding the American people. Federal and state authorities have affirmed that food industry workers and the businesses that employ them are essential.

Far better than most public officials, you understand that food and agriculture industries have amazing diversity. With a broad array of inconsistent, sometimes conflicting advice to achieve a COVID-19 safe workplace in various settings, well intentioned public health officials at the state and local levels are prone to impose requirements inconsistently and, sometimes, in a manner that is more disruptive of essential business operations than the best scientific information would warrant.

We respectfully request your leadership in bringing together appropriate federal agencies and stakeholders to provide better clarity on recent CDC/OSHA guidance regarding what actions food and agriculture businesses should take to provide a COVID-19 safe workplace. As part of that effort, we recommend consideration of a process whereby food and agriculture industry segments may seek segment specific guidance, as needed, based on unique workplace safety concerns.

Further, we respectfully request a teleconference with appropriate federal personnel to elaborate upon our request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

American Bakers Association  
American Beverage Association  
American Frozen Food Institute  
Consumer Brands Association  
Corn Refiners Association  
Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S.  
FMI -- the Food Industry Association  
Global Chain Alliance  
International Dairy Foods Association  
International Foodservice Distributors Association  
National Confectioners Association  
National Fisheries Institute  
National Grain and Feed Association  
National Grocers Association  
National Milk Producers Federation  
North American Millers Association  
Peanut and Tree Nut Processors Association  
SNAC International  
United Fresh Produce Association

cc: The Honorable Eugene Scalia  
The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
The Honorable Alex Azar  
The Honorable Kate O'Scannlain  
The Honorable Stephen Hahn