

Steven C. Anderson, FASAE, CAE, IOM

President & Chief Executive Officer

The Honorable Larry Hogan
Governor of Maryland
National Governors Association Chair
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor of New York State
National Governors Association Vice Chair
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

July 21, 2020

Dear Governors Hogan and Cuomo,

Given your roles as chair and vice chair of the National Governors Association, **I am writing with grim concerns about the ongoing COVID-19 response and economic recovery if states fail to provide certainty in the policies under which pharmacies and pharmacists are serving their patients and communities. I urge you to leverage your bipartisan leadership roles to raise awareness of the need to sustain the critical policy flexibilities that have been put into place to help pharmacies and pharmacists meet the health and wellness needs of Americans.**

As you know, the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) represents traditional drug stores, supermarkets and mass merchants with pharmacies. NACDS members operate over 40,000 pharmacies and include regional chains with a minimum of four stores and national companies. Chains employ nearly 3 million individuals, including 155,000 pharmacists.

The leadership from the National Governors Association is needed. It is important for states to recognize that now is not the time to roll back the level of preparedness that has been created. It also is critical to recognize the unworkability of a lurching, stop-and-start approach to pharmacy policy – and that this unworkability can have implications across state borders and throughout regions.

Given the unprecedented demands of helping to meet patients' needs related to COVID-19 and related to other illnesses and conditions, pharmacies have made large-scale investments in infrastructure, equipment, technology and processes. Such investments have focused on innovative COVID-19 services, maximizing the safety of pharmacy teams and customers, ensuring wise approaches to staffing, building remote prescription processing capabilities, expanding delivery options, and much more. If governors bring to an end the Executive Orders that made it reasonable to embark on these innovations for the ultimate benefit of public health – even if the expectation is that the flexibilities may be restored at some point in the near future – such actions disrupt, discourage and disregard the spirit of partnership and the continuity of business.

We all can agree this is a critical time. It is essential that pharmacies continue to have available to them the policies that help to keep pharmacies open, to help protect patients and pharmacy staff, to help patients stay on their medication therapies, and more. It also is imperative that pharmacies have the full capability to continue to ramp up COVID-19 testing, and to prepare completely for the imminent flu vaccination season and ultimately for the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines and treatments.

As has been the case throughout this severe public health crisis, NACDS stands committed to working with you and with all governors to help advance policies that are essential to our work together for public health and safety and for economic recovery. We need your partnership and we need your help.

Sincerely,



Steven C. Anderson, FASAE, CAE, IOM
President and Chief Executive Officer

CC:

The Honorable Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama
The Honorable Mike Dunleavy, Governor of Alaska
The Honorable Doug Ducey, Governor of Arizona
The Honorable Asa Hutchinson, Governor of Arkansas
The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor of California
The Honorable Jared Polis, Governor of Colorado
The Honorable Ned Lamont, Governor of Connecticut
The Honorable John Carney, Governor of Delaware
The Honorable Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida
The Honorable Brian Kemp, Governor of Georgia
The Honorable David Ige, Governor of Hawaii
The Honorable Brad Little, Governor of Idaho
The Honorable J. B. Pritzker, Governor of Illinois
The Honorable Eric Holcomb, Governor of Indiana
The Honorable Kim Reynolds, Governor of Iowa
The Honorable Laura Kelly, Governor of Kansas
The Honorable Andy Beshear, Governor of Kentucky
The Honorable John Bel Edwards, Governor of Louisiana
The Honorable Janet Mills, Governor of Maine
The Honorable Charlie Baker, Governor of Massachusetts
The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer, Governor of Michigan
The Honorable Tim Walz, Governor of Minnesota
The Honorable Tate Reeves, Governor of Mississippi
The Honorable Mike Parson, Governor of Missouri
The Honorable Steve Bullock, Governor of Montana
The Honorable Pete Ricketts, Governor of Nebraska
The Honorable Steve Sisolak, Governor of Nevada
The Honorable Chris Sununu, Governor of New Hampshire
The Honorable Phil Murphy, Governor of New Jersey
The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor of New Mexico
The Honorable Roy Cooper, Governor of North Carolina
The Honorable Doug Burgum, Governor of North Dakota
The Honorable Mike DeWine, Governor of Ohio
The Honorable Kevin Stitt, Governor of Oklahoma
The Honorable Kate Brown, Governor of Oregon

The Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor of Pennsylvania
The Honorable Gina Raimondo, Governor of Rhode Island
The Honorable Henry McMaster, Governor of South Carolina
The Honorable Kristi Noem, Governor of South Dakota
The Honorable Bill Lee, Governor of Tennessee
The Honorable Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas
The Honorable Gary Herbert, Governor of Utah
The Honorable Phil Scott, Governor of Vermont
The Honorable Ralph Northam, Governor of Virginia
The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor of Washington State
The Honorable Jim Justice, Governor of West Virginia
The Honorable Tony Evers, Governor of Wisconsin
The Honorable Mark Gordon, Governor of Wyoming