



March 20, 2020

Mr. Bill McBride
National Governors Association
444 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 267
Washington, D.C. 2000

Mr. Joe Buscaino
National League of Cities
660 North Capitol St., NW
Washington, DC 20001

Mr. Tim Storey
National Conference of State Legislators
7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230

Ms. Jennifer Imo
National Association of Towns and Townships
1901 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20006

Mr. Tom Cochran
The United States Conference of Mayors
1620 I St. NW
Washington, DC 20006

Mr. Matthew Chase
National Association of Counties
660 North Capitol St., NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. McBride, Mr. Storey, Mr. Cochran, Mr. Buscaino, Ms. Imo and Mr. Chase:

On behalf of the electrical manufacturing, distribution and installation industry, we are writing to encourage your Members to continue to provide clear and informed guidance to the private sector regarding essential and non-essential businesses. While those who can utilize social distancing and work-from-home options should continue to do so, we strongly believe that our joint industries must continue to operate to support installed essential equipment and critical infrastructure. Our industry serves Americans both at home and at work in many ways that ensure power systems and applications are made, installed, maintained, and/or repaired appropriately in a timely manner.

Our industry is essential to the health and safety of Americans, and the maintenance of our modern society. Every stage of the supply chain—from suppliers to manufacturers to transporters to distributors to contractors—constitutes a link that, operating seamlessly, ensures the products and services of our electrified world are at hand in this crisis. All critical infrastructure including hospitals, businesses, and emergency services rely on electricity. Consequently, any delay caused by confusion about what is an essential business could delay access to necessary supplies and contractors needed to get the job done.

The essential nature of the electrical supply industry is affirmed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS recently issued guidance¹ that categorizes “critical manufacturing” as “Workers necessary for the manufacturing of materials and products needed for medical supply chains, transportation, energy, communications, food and agriculture, chemical manufacturing, nuclear facilities, the operation of dams, water and wastewater treatment, emergency services, and the defense industrial base.” In addition, the guidance refers to critical workers in the broader energy sector as “Workers who maintain, ensure, or restore the generation, transmission, and distribution of electric power”.

Accordingly, as you consider making decisions related to this health crisis, we urge most strongly that you help ensure that the electrical supply chain including contractors, distributors, and manufacturers is addressed in a manner consistent with the DHS guidance for critical industrial sectors and a critical infrastructure workforce. To do otherwise will lead to additional confusion and unnecessary disruptions to society and undermine the confidence Americans have in their policymakers to make rational policy decisions during this pandemic. We need your leadership to ensure the power stays on for everyone.

Signed,



Kevin J. Cosgriff
President and CEO
National Electrical Manufacturers Association



Tom Naber
President & CEO
National Association of Electrical Distributors



David Long
Chief Executive Officer
National Electrical Contractors Association



Spenser Villwock, MNM, CAE
Chief Executive Officer
Independent Electrical Contractors

¹ <https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/CISA-Guidance-on-Essential-Critical-Infrastructure-Workers-1-20-508c.pdf>