



March 20, 2020

Governor Larry Hogan
Chairman
National Governors Association

Governor Andrew Cuomo
Vice Chairman
National Governors Association

Dear Governors Hogan and Cuomo,

Thank you for your leadership during this unprecedented health crisis being faced across America. As a nation, we will continue to collectively rise to the challenge to navigate the threat of the coronavirus (COVID-19), and we believe our nation will come out of this stronger and more unified. To meet critical needs, the hardworking men and women of the non-alcoholic beverage industry are working around the clock to bring beverages from bottling plant to retailer and into the hands of consumers.

As chairman and vice chairman of the National Governors Association (NGA), we respectfully request that you work with your fellow governors on the following:

- **Follow Federal Guidance on Essential Workers:** Yesterday, the Department of Homeland Security issued guidance on essential infrastructure and workforce, which reflects the aligned position of the nation's health, food safety, transportation, workforce and national security agencies. The guidance [identified](#) "workers supporting groceries, pharmacies and other retail that sells food and beverage products" as "essential critical infrastructure workers." We request that governors adhere to this guidance so that the food and beverage industry can support them in meeting the challenge of keeping our retail and grocery establishments stocked with foods, beverages, medical supplies and other goods required by their consumers.
- **Establish Uniform Standard on Truck Weight Restrictions:** Some states have acted on waiving truck weight and size limits. To eliminate confusion and potential hurdles, we ask for a uniform approach from the states to increase allowable truck weight to at least 90,000 pounds, which will better allow for delivery of essential goods in response to the coronavirus. There is an urgent need to deliver foods, beverages, medical supplies and other goods to communities across America.

During this time, it is crucial that essential personnel and the American public at-large have access to beverages such as bottled water, teas, sports drinks and other functional beverages that not only serve as hydration, but can also provide electrolytes, antioxidants and other essential vitamins and minerals. In order to keep grocery stores and retail establishments stocked, it is critical you encourage your fellow governors to align on these serious issues.

Doing so will ensure continuity of the food and beverage supply – as well as other essential goods and services for Americans – and limit any potential confusion from state to state. Earlier this week, the American Beverage Association (ABA) [wrote](#) to President Donald Trump making similar request.

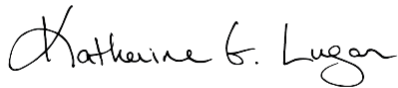
Our industry strongly commends those governors who have advanced similar guidance in recent emergency declarations, and we urge you to work with other governors to help us meet our supply chain demand.

Governors and other locally elected officials are in a difficult time, when critical action may need to be taken to ensure the health and safety of their constituents. We recognize these decisions are far from easy. NGA is a powerful platform to support governors across our nation in understanding the importance – and constituent benefit – of following, together, on these critical issues.

As we have communicated throughout this crisis, American consumers should know that, building on decades of good business practices and responsible regulatory policies for good manufacturing and food safety, the food and beverage industry will continue to follow all federal, state and local regulations and guidance.

Again, I thank you both for your leadership, and the difficult but necessary actions you have taken to protect the citizens in your states of Maryland and New York. I would greatly appreciate NGA urgently considering this request.

Sincerely,



Katherine Lugar
President & CEO
American Beverage Association

CC: Bill McBride
Executive Director
National Governors Association

Mary Catherine Ott
Legislative Director, Homeland Security & Public Safety Committee\
National Governors Association

Tiffany Waddell
Senior Advisory and Director of Government Relations
Office of Governor Larry Hogan

Jill Derosiers
Chief of Staff
Office of Governor Andrew Cuomo