



March 21, 2020

Mayor Bryan K Barnett
President
The United States Conference of Mayors

Mayor Greg Fischer
Vice President
The United States Conference of Mayors

Mayor Nana Whaley
Second Vice President
The United States Conference of Mayors

Dear Mayors Barnett, Fischer and Whaley,

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 in your communities around the clock to bring beverages from bottling plant to retailer and into the hands of consumers.

As the leaders of The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM), we respectfully request that you work with your fellow mayors on the following:

- **Follow Federal Guidance on Essential Workers:** On Thursday, 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 mayors and local officials 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.

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 mayors to work with their governors to align on this serious issue.

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](#) and the leadership of the [National Governors Association](#) (NGA) making a similar request.

Mayors 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. USCM is a powerful platform to support mayors 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 cities. I would greatly appreciate USCM urgently considering this request.

Sincerely,



Katherine Lugar
President & CEO
American Beverage Association

CC: Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
The United States Conference of Mayors