

**From:** Office of Senator Cory Booker <noreply@booker.senate.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 24, 2020 5:00 PM  
**To:** Stracco, Chris  
**Subject:** PPE Letter

April 24, 2020

Dear Mayor Stracco:

Thank you for taking the time to write to me about shortages of medical supplies needed to respond to COVID-19. This is a moment of crisis. It demands urgent action from all of us, and especially from our elected leaders. As your United States Senator, please know that I will continue to fight for the solutions and resources that will protect our communities from both the health and economic threats of this virus.

As New Jersey continues to respond to a growing number of COVID-19 cases, health systems are reaching – and in some instances, exceeding – their capacity and struggling to secure the personal protective equipment (PPE) needed to address this public health crisis. The severe shortage of PPE for our first responders, hospital personnel, and other frontline health care workers is unacceptable; many entities are reporting they are just days away from running out of PPE and have had to resort to reusing supplies to provide some level of protection. Some, particularly among first responders, have flat out been unable to obtain adequate PPE.

For that reason, as Congress has worked to address COVID-19, I have made it a priority to ensure that our health care workers on the frontlines of this pandemic have the supplies they need to keep themselves, their families, their patients, and their communities healthy. I have strongly urged President Trump to use his authority under the Defense Production Act to direct the manufacturing and procurement of the PPE desperately needed by health care workers, first responders, and others. Additionally, I am a cosponsor of S.3570, introduced by Senator Baldwin on March 23, 2020, which would require the federal government to immediately purchase 300 million N95 masks through the Defense Production Act. I have also urged the Advanced Medical Technology Association, an organization representing medical technology companies that manufacture PPE, to increase domestic PPE manufacturing as we continue to look at all possible avenues to increase New Jersey's stockpile of medical supplies. Additionally, my team and I have worked to support the State of New Jersey's search for PPE by seeking suppliers both in the United States and internationally, and connecting them to our state government when leads are promising.

Congress has also passed legislation that will aid health care entities in getting the medical supplies they need. On March 5, 2020, I supported and the Senate passed a bipartisan \$8.3 billion response bill, which

was signed into law the next day and provides emergency funding to combat the COVID-19 outbreak. This law, the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, allocated \$2.2 billion to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19; \$3 billion for research and development of vaccines and treatments; and \$100 million to support health centers, including through purchasing PPE. And on March 26, 2020, I supported and the Senate passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, which was later signed into law. This legislation includes \$2 trillion in further economic support for individuals and our health care system struggling through this growing crisis. The relief package includes \$16 billion to replenish the Strategic National Stockpile with PPE and other supplies, and \$1 billion to boost domestic supply chains in order to ramp up production of PPE. Additionally, the legislation included various funds which could be used to purchase PPE including \$100 billion for hospitals and health care providers; \$4.3 billion for the CDC to support states and localities; \$850 million for the Byrne-Justice Assistance Grant Program; and \$100 million for the Assistance to Firefighter Grants. In addition to having access to these sources of funding, New Jersey will also be receiving \$3.4 billion to continue essential services as resources are being diverted to address the COVID-19 response.

This is an evolving situation and circumstances may change quickly. Heed the instructions of public health officials and do your part to help stop the spread of the coronavirus. Should you have any questions about COVID-19 and New Jersey's efforts to mitigate its spread, please go to <https://covid19.nj.gov/> or call the 24/7 hotline at 1-800-222-1222. For assistance with federal programs, and to learn about resources available to you, you can visit <https://www.booker.senate.gov/coronavirus/> or call our office at (973)-639-8700.

Again, thank you for writing to me. I am honored to represent you in the United States Senate, and I value what I hear from New Jerseyans about the issues our state and nation face. Please continue to keep in touch with your thoughts and concerns.

This is a challenging time, but I know that together we will get through this. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me and my team if we can be of help to you and your loved ones in any way.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker

United States Senator