

April 14, 2020

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The Honorable Michael R. Pence
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President,

In recent weeks, our country has come together in extraordinary ways to address the unprecedented health and economic crisis caused by COVID-19. As CEOs of many of America's largest employers, Business Roundtable members have been inspired by the courage and determination of so many Americans, including healthcare workers, public health officials, first responders and the many employees of our companies who are working to provide the country with essential goods and services. We are also moved by the generosity of the American spirit during this uncertain time, as neighbors look out for one another and help keep the most vulnerable among us safe. We are confident that Americans will adapt to the many changes we need to make in the months ahead and that the country will emerge from this crisis with renewed strength and resolve.

While our country continues to take the steps necessary to bring the public health crisis under control, including following national, state, and local guidance on shelter in place and physical distancing orders, we appreciate the efforts of the Trump Administration and many Governors to begin the difficult work of developing economic recovery plans. It is important to plan now for the gradual lifting of some restrictions on activity when policymakers, guided by public health officials, conclude the time is right. This work is especially important to small and medium-sized businesses – many of whom are our customers and suppliers – and for individuals and families who are bearing the brunt of the current crisis. Careful planning now will help us manage the health crisis, while also mitigating economic suffering as much as possible.

As the public and private sectors undertake this work, Business Roundtable endorses the following overriding **principles**:

Safety First. Protecting the lives of Americans must remain the country's paramount interest. Americans need to know that policymakers and employers are prioritizing their safety. A successful recovery strategy must give Americans confidence that they can safely return to work and public spaces. This means reopening at the right time, as guided by public health officials. It also means that as community-based movement restrictions are gradually lifted, those restrictions will need to be replaced by other kinds of protections that

keep Americans safe, including, among other things, personal protective equipment, cleaning procedures, testing and other diagnostic tools, and virus monitoring.

Coordination. While we value the critical role states play in protecting public health and safety, federal guidelines on a range of issues will help build confidence for workers and consumers by fostering a common understanding of the measures being taken across the country. Federal guidelines will also help businesses of all sizes plan, prepare for and execute the most effective recovery possible. Even on issues not covered by federal guidelines, states should endeavor to be as coordinated as possible, particularly states within the same region.

In the coming weeks, Business Roundtable will be preparing a more detailed document outlining approaches to a safe recovery and revitalization. **Our work will focus on the following issues:**

Federal Guidelines

- **Risk Levels.** The federal government has an important role to play in helping define the public health criteria that would inform a state or local decision to begin lifting activity restrictions. Specific factors in determining risk level should be developed with guidance from public health officials and could include, for example, local caseload and infection rates, capacity in the healthcare system, and the ability to conduct rigorous diagnostics and disease monitoring. (See Exhibit 3)
- **Public and Workplace Safety.** Business Roundtable believes it will be important for the federal government to issue national guidelines outlining appropriate safety measures such as personal protective equipment, cleaning procedures, testing and other diagnostic tools, and virus monitoring. Clear federal guidelines, implemented across states, will give workers and consumers greater confidence, will ensure that essential services can continue to function without interruption, and will help direct use of critical supplies to the areas with greatest need.

Access to Critical Resources and Supplies. Alongside the adoption of consistent national guidelines, we urge policymakers at all levels to rapidly identify and invest in the critical resources our country needs in order to lift restrictions safely.

- **Testing and Virus Monitoring.** Better data and information will be essential, both to identify and isolate specific cases and their contacts and to monitor infection rates and potential hotspots. We welcome efforts by policymakers to focus now on development of a comprehensive, coordinated approach to testing and monitoring and to ensure we have sufficient resources to reach these goals.
- **Supplies.** We appreciate your close and urgent attention to addressing continued shortages of personal protective equipment and other resources needed for testing, tracing and monitoring, as well as disruptions to the supply chains necessary to produce such materials. Personal protective equipment and other supplies should continue to go first to healthcare workers who need them most. As more individuals return to work, supplies will need to be even more broadly available to restart operations and keep workers safe. We strongly support additional investment in PPE, testing equipment, and other critical supplies, and clear federal guidance on how and when they should be used.

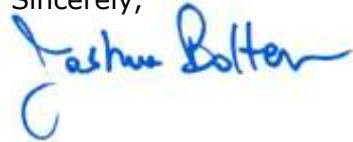
Addressing these shortages will require both increased domestic and global capacity as well as access to foreign inputs and supplies. We urge continued coordination with trading partners to keep markets open and strengthen supply chains to ensure that healthcare workers, essential services and other businesses have access to the resources and supplies we need to keep Americans safe.

- Therapeutics and Vaccines. Business Roundtable members in the healthcare community are going all out in the effort to develop therapeutics and vaccines. To ultimately defeat the virus, we need a globally coordinated approach to development, testing, approval and production. We urge that policymakers work with the global community to ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to accelerate the development, approval and deployment of effective interventions to combat the spread of this virus.

Vital Worker and Community Needs. As large employers, we are fully committed to the health and safety of our workers and customers. While governments and businesses are investing in the tools to keep workers and consumers safe, we cannot lose sight of needs outside the workplace, including safe schools, childcare and transportation. This includes the restoration of comprehensive healthcare services as soon as possible so that non-coronavirus healthcare needs can be addressed. In your recovery planning, we urge you to prioritize these critical issues. We look forward to engaging with you on common sense solutions.

We have attached some exhibits outlining a framework for approaching these issues. We look forward to working with the Trump Administration, Governors, local officials and other key stakeholders on a strong and lasting recovery.

Sincerely,



Joshua Bolten
President & CEO, Business Roundtable

C: Lawrence A. Kudlow
Jared C. Kushner
Christopher P. Liddell
Mark R. Meadows

Exhibit 1: Federal guidelines are essential to a coordinated approach

	Federal role	State and local role
Public health strategy	Set the national strategy	Execute the strategy based on local conditions
Guidelines	Provide national guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Considerations on when and where to lift restrictions• Defined risk levels• Measures on how to ensure safety in public spaces and workplaces	Implement guidelines based on local conditions
Investment in critical resources	Provide critical resources and coordinate national healthcare capacity and national virus monitoring	Provide and manage resources and investments in healthcare capacity, virus monitoring, etc.

Exhibit 2: Example considerations on when and where to lift restrictions

National guidelines to be implemented based on local conditions

Epidemic status

State and trajectory of the epidemic (caseload, growth rate, transmission risk, etc.)

Healthcare capacity

Healthcare system capacity and preparedness measures (e.g., ICU beds, ventilators)

Sufficient capacity for all non-COVID healthcare operations and services

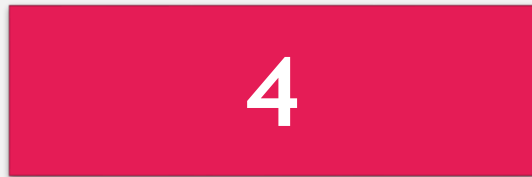
Virus monitoring

Broad diagnostic and disease monitoring strategies

Capacity to test, trace, monitor and report at scale

Exhibit 3: Federal guidance should define risk levels

Example of risk levels



Shelter-in-place with essential services only



Gradual increased freedom of movement coupled with strict measures on gathering limitations, physical distancing, cleaning protocols, testing, tracing, virus monitoring, etc.



Further lifting of restrictions coupled with targeted measures on physical distancing, cleaning protocols, testing, tracing, virus monitoring, etc.



Return to normal activity levels (widespread availability of vaccine or reliable treatment)

Risk levels, applied to the appropriate geographic area by state/local elected and public health officials, should guide restrictions on key categories

Exhibit 4: Example measures to ensure public health and safety

Categories of national guidelines, to be adapted and implemented by state and local officials

	CATEGORY	MEASURES
Movement and Activity	Work / activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitations placed on the operations of individuals and business (e.g., lockdown)
	Gathering size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitations on gathering of individuals (e.g., meeting size, event size)
	Physical distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitations on physical proximity to other individuals (including occupancy)
	Movement and commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitations on the movement of people and goods across/within regions
Public and Workplace Safety and Trust	Access to establishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry conditions for access to workplaces, stores, and public venues (e.g., health checks)
	Hygiene and cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions taken to disinfect public and private areas, maintain personal hygiene
	Protective equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of protective gear (e.g., face masks) outside of the home / at workplaces
	Special measures for vulnerable population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusted precautions to ensure people most at risk are protected (e.g., special hours at stores)
Monitoring	Testing, tracing, and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for application and extent of testing, tracing, and monitoring to guide appropriate actions
	Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication protocols for reporting on testing measures and ensuring adherence by stakeholders to established guidelines

Exhibit 5: Example guidance on measures to vary across risk levels

CATEGORY		4	3	2	1
Movement and Activity	Work / activity	Restricted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelter-in-place with essential services only Gathering size (e.g., <10) Strict physical distancing Essential travel Appropriate protocols and requirements for essential workers 	Cautious <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gradual shift to in-person work Gathering size (e.g., <100) Strict physical distancing 	Vigilant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further lifting of restrictions Gathering size (e.g., <500) Moderate physical distancing 	Fully open <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to normal activity levels <i>Rebuild readiness and invest in HC system modernization</i>
	Gathering size				
	Physical distancing				
	Movement and commerce				
Public and Workplace Safety and Trust	Access to establishments	Heightened <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust cleaning and disinfecting protocols Added protective equipment requirements Conditions for vulnerable populations in place 	Heightened <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widespread testing Robust tracking and monitoring Reporting 		
	Hygiene and cleaning				
	Protective equipment				
	Special measures for vulnerable population				
Monitoring	Testing, tracing, and monitoring				
	Reporting				