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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **AACI Urges Immediate Implementation of Defense Production Act**

In a [letter](#) today to President Donald Trump, the Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) implored him to immediately invoke the Defense Production Act to marshal American manufacturing to forcefully confront the COVID-19 emergency.

The association also called for military mobilization to help build temporary hospital facilities and to assist hospital personnel.

Signed by the leaders of 97 AACI cancer centers in the United States, the letter noted that cancer patients are particularly susceptible to having serious complications and poor outcomes from COVID-19, and that some cancer center patients have already contracted the virus and died from respiratory failure.

A widespread shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) is seriously compounding the crisis for patients and health care providers, according to the letter. Such equipment includes surgical and N95 masks, gowns, nasal swabs, and face shields, as well as advanced life support systems, such as ventilators and ECMO devices.

Cancer patients generally require frequent interactions with health care providers, who are being increasingly affected themselves with COVID-19.

“[T]he situation is already desperate in many of our hospitals, and rapidly edging towards utter disaster,” cancer center directors wrote. “Failure to act decisively and immediately will undoubtedly result in the tragic, massive, and ultimately avoidable loss of many American lives.”

Beyond implementing the Defense Production Act to boost PPE manufacturing, AACI requested that the president mobilize military units, such as the Army Corps of Engineers, to aid in rapid construction of temporary hospital facilities, and to direct military medical personnel to assist frontline emergency room and intensive care unit workers.

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*AACI is dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer by enhancing the impact of North America’s leading academic cancer centers. For more information, please visit [aaci-cancer.org](http://aaci-cancer.org).*