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Dear Dr. Birx;

I hope this finds you well. On behalf of our association, you are doing an incredible job leading the federal task force which is navigating this country through a great crisis.

I need to raise a concern that affects the health and well-being of millions of our fellow citizens. I am urging the task force to clarify that health and nutrition stores such which provide essential vitamins (i.e. vitamin D) and other nutrients that help keep our immune systems healthy as well as providing a variety of other foods and supplements should be deemed “essential” in this time of crisis for the purposes of vaccination.

There is uncertainty right now created by individual states’ interpretations on whether health and nutrition stores have been deemed essential retail establishments. For the millions of people who rely on stores that retail dietary supplements this uncertainty is troubling and could cause such stores to close unnecessarily, and not allow their front-line workers to have access to vaccination.

I believe, Dr. Birx, that this issue could be resolved if the task force could simply clarify the language in the current guidance that health and nutrition stores were on a par with grocery and drug stores and are essential businesses. Dietary supplement manufacturers are specifically referred to as essential in the latest CISA guidance (version 4.0), so this would be consistent with that existing policy, and the whole supply chain would have access to vaccination. The millions who use dietary supplements to stay healthy would continue to do so uninterrupted. Their continued access is very important, especially at a time when health is so important.

Anything you can do, Dr. Birx, to facilitate this request would be most appreciated. Please feel free to contact me any time.

All my best wishes to you and your entire team.

Thank you,

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