



WHAT METRO IAF IS DOING TO GET CRITICAL SUPPLIES TO FRONTLINE WORKERS

April 5, 2020

Tens of thousands of essential COVID-19 workers -- medical, food service, transit, delivery, building services and others -- are part of Metro IAF's network. Here is how we are working on their behalf to remedy life-threatening shortages of N95 masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE).

LISTENING TO FRONTLINE WORKERS AND THEIR INSTITUTIONS: As we've reached out to connect and hear concerns throughout our communities, we've heard story after story of two kinds of fears among workers: 1) That they and their families will get sick and possibly die because they lack PPE, and 2) That they will get fired for complaining about this crisis. Some Metro IAF members are doing double duty in this war -- working on the front lines, while also sewing PPE at home and distributing it to fellow workers. Metro IAF has engaged hospitals, community clinics and other healthcare providers with whom we have longstanding relationships. They share frontline workers' fears of running out of N95 masks and other PPE -- and in some cases already are. Purchasing managers have described the desperate scramble underway for masks and the extortionate prices (more than 10 times the ordinary rate) and terms (100% prepayment) they are being forced to accept to protect their employees.

SEEKING IMMEDIATE SUPPLIES OF N95 MASKS DURING THIS SUPPLY CRISIS: Along with our partner, the [Community Purchasing Alliance](#) (CPA), Metro IAF is seeking to assist healthcare buyers in accessing limited supplies of masks. Where necessary, we are seeking to aggregate smaller purchasers so they can achieve minimum quantities distributors are requiring for purchase.

DEMANDING ACTION BY 3M TO CURB PRICE GOUGING: As described in [The Intercept](#), Metro IAF is pushing 3M CEO Mike Roman to [end price gouging by distributors](#) of 3M's N95 masks, to compile a database of existing inventories and facilitate purchases by healthcare buyers, and to ask for federal assistance in managing its supply chain for N95s. Roman has not yet acted on any of [these requests](#).

ENGAGING ATTORNEYS GENERAL TO USE ANTI-PRICE-GOUGING STATUTES AND OTHER TOOLS: We are asking several state AGs to form an ad hoc consortium to act quickly in this matter, and to begin by: 1) Informing Mike Roman that they lack the resources to proactively police and clean up 3M's supply chain, and 2) Notifying Mr. Roman that their states' anti-price-gouging statutes, in some cases, impose civil and/or criminal penalties on companies that have reason to know of price gouging by smaller operators in their supply chains.

ORGANIZING 3M INSTITUTIONAL SHAREHOLDERS TO PUSH 3M CEO & BOARD TO ACT: Metro IAF is organizing religious, philanthropic, labor, public-sector and other institutional investors to push 3M to curb price gouging, help healthcare buyers access scarce PPE, and seek federal assistance.

ASKING THE PRESIDENT TO MOBILIZE THE DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY: We have called for the full and systematic use of the military's unparalleled logistics capability to replace broken supply chains during this emergency, rather than haphazard actions coordinated by White House staffers. We are seeking discussions with key elected officials who can move the President on this.

SEEKING STABLE LONG-TERM SUPPLIES OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT: While the period of peak demand is expected to be this month, PPE shortages are likely to persist as this emergency drags on. Metro IAF and CPA are in discussions with domestic manufacturers interested in meeting long-term demand, creating resilient regional supply chains, and employing workers at living wages.

PLEASE [DONATE TO METRO IAF](#) TO ALLOW US TO CONTINUE THIS AND OTHER CRITICAL WORK