

Energy and Commerce Committee Republicans, led by full committee Republican Leader Greg Walden (R-OR) and Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Republican Leader Brett Guthrie (R-KY), have been working the last several months to develop recommendations for responding to a potential second wave of COVID-19 infections in the United States.

Today's [report](#) includes health care supply chain recommendations officials should consider to better protect the country as we also are approaching influenza season. This is the third and final pillar of recommendations in the E&C Republicans' Second Wave Preparedness Project. The first pillar on testing and surveillance and the second pillar on vaccine and therapeutic development can be found [here](#) and [here](#), respectively.

#### **Key Recommendations:**

- States should consider building independent medical supply stockpiles to be better prepared to manage critical shortages of medical resources.
- Congress and the Executive Branch should clarify the role of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) during a global pandemic or biological event which affects the whole country, including mechanisms for coordinating health care resources to the states and territories, to provide a shared understanding of the SNS' role in that situation.
- Congress and the Executive Branch should examine the use of the SNS in the first wave of the pandemic, the coordination of the SNS' response activities with FEMA, and potential overlaps in authorities and responsibilities among HHS, FEMA, and DoD, and put in place any needed changes or processes to most effectively replenish and manage the SNS.
- Congress and the Executive Branch should explore whether any of the HHS plans for enhanced SNS IT communication and supply management can be expedited for implementation before the fall.
- Congress and the Executive Branch should review HHS' procurement and acquisition processes and staffing to assess if barriers prevent the SNS from using HHS Defense Production Act (DPA) authorities, which provide mechanisms for priority rating SNS agreements and orders or allocate distribution of a contractor's stock inventory.
- Congress and the Executive Branch should consider whether, and if so, what, potential therapeutics for COVID-19 should be included in the SNS once authorized or approved by FDA.
- In order to ensure the stability of supply chains, Congress and the Executive Branch should evaluate how federal agencies coordinate contracting considerations, and ensure that they clearly communicate their actions and plans regarding medical supply chain coordination efforts to ensure process transparency.
- Congress and the Executive Branch should review critical medical equipment temporary tariff exclusions to determine if additional exclusions are needed, and if any approved exclusions need to be extended to assist in the response to the pandemic.
- The Executive Branch should monitor testing supplies for diagnostic and surveillance testing needs. In considering allocation and distribution, the Executive Branch should examine whether use of its DPA allocations authority or other mechanisms, such as voluntary

agreements, are available and appropriate to allocate supplies based on outbreak areas and fluctuating testing needs.

- Congress, the Executive Branch, and the private sector should consider how to most effectively and efficiently increase the technology-based capabilities for medical supply chain management.
- Congress and the Executive Branch should consider how to incentivize additional production of critical health supplies, diversify production, address other supply chain dependencies that impact the health care supply chain, fill information and data gaps, and promote U.S. leadership on global health and trade issues.
- Congress should promote policies to encourage domestic production of critical medical supplies and pharmaceutical products. Increased domestic manufacturing can be achieved by creating additional market-based incentives without imposing sweeping government mandates or controls.
- Congress and the Executive Branch should consider what existing laws and regulations are impeding domestic manufacturing of critical products and determine whether any such laws or regulations should be changed or eliminated.
- Congress and the Executive Branch should give careful consideration to the medical products that are needed to safeguard public health and the safety of health care workers, such as PPE and certain biologics and drugs, and strategically prioritize the development of manufacturing those products domestically, and/or focus on more secure and diverse global supply chains as necessary.
- Given the large numbers of people who have been tested for COVID-19 at Community Based Testing Sites and other dedicated COVID-19 testing sites, Congress, the Executive Branch, and the states should consider supplying dedicated COVID-19 testing locations with tests that diagnose both influenza and COVID-19, to preserve testing supplies and so that those with symptoms can be appropriately treated.
- To conserve resources and to facilitate outreach to the teleworking population and rural communities, Congress and the Executive Branch should consider supporting creative outreach venues to administer the influenza vaccine, such as mobile influenza vaccine sites arranged through collaboration with mobile health care groups such as blood bank organizations that have blood mobiles; mobile mammogram vans; mobile medical tents stationed in pre-announced locations for set periods of time and variable hours; and drive-thru vaccine stations.
- The Executive Branch should work with the states to create an influenza distribution plan in anticipation of the higher volume of people who will seek the vaccine this year, and in future years. A comprehensive plan to increase influenza vaccine distribution will also help establish a framework to distribute and administer a COVID-19 vaccine to millions of people when a vaccine becomes available. As a subsidiary part of the national educational campaign to increase influenza vaccination coverage generally, the Executive Branch should consider implementing an influenza vaccination strategy targeted towards increasing availability and accessibility of influenza vaccines for COVID-19 high-risk patient categories.

Read the full list of recommendations and findings [here](#).