

March 17, 2020

The Vice President
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Mr. Vice President:

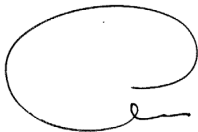
On behalf of more than 2,000 member newspapers of the News Media Alliance, we appreciate the work that you and the President's Task Force on the Coronavirus are doing to coordinate and implement the response to one of the worst pandemics our country has experienced in more than a century.

Newspapers and their dedicated journalists and other employees are working closely with government agencies at the federal, state and local levels to provide essential health information to our readers across all platforms.

In recent days, public officials across the country have begun ordering the shutdown of "non-essential" businesses for periods of time. The goal of these orders is to appropriately respond to this unprecedented health crisis. We are heartened that, so far, newspapers have been identified as essential businesses in these orders – akin to grocery stores, pharmacies and other businesses that are critical to public welfare.

We ask that, in any action by the Administration to limit commercial activity, the government recognize news publishing and reporting as "essential" to public health and welfare. We also ask that you encourage state and local officials to make the same designation. Distribution of quality news and information is absolutely central to all efforts to get beyond the crisis.

Most respectfully,



David Chavern
President & CEO