

Commissioner Thierry Breton
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Brussels, 17 April 2020

Re: Call for a coordinated response to the COVID-19 crisis with regard to defining critical infrastructure and maintaining global supply chains

Dear Commissioner Breton,

We are writing to you on behalf of the American Chamber of Commerce to the European Union (AmCham EU) to voice our support for the European Commission's actions to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, and to encourage your continued efforts to ensure that there is a strong and coordinated response at EU level.

As Member States are preparing to lift certain confinement measures, we remain acutely aware that we are facing an unprecedented public health and socio-economic emergency. Now more than ever, strong cooperation between public authorities, the business community and civil society will be essential in finding pragmatic and innovative solutions to our shared challenges.

AmCham EU represents over 150 companies of American parentage committed to and invested in Europe. Our member companies are facing new challenges as they adapt to the current circumstances. During this time, we believe that clarity is essential to minimise any disruptions in the production and delivery of critical products and services. Our companies operate in a large variety of sectors, many of which are affected by the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 crisis. We welcome the European Commission's efforts in providing the EU with a comprehensive roadmap towards gradually lifting COVID-19 containment measures. However, as we strive to continue cooperating with the EU Institutions and Member States, we call on the European Commission to continue its work in addressing the following priority issues:

- Our member companies' main concern is maintaining a reliable supply of products and services necessary to benefit European citizens and the economy. We therefore **call on the European Commission to take all the necessary actions to ensure that global supply chains remain open and to refrain from and prevent any protectionist tendencies**. The EU Member States should implement a consistent and clear strategy to ensure the uninterrupted flow of goods and services, both within the Single Market and with our biggest trading partners such as the United States. As an example, the current unilateral restrictions on the movement of pharmaceuticals, medical devices and personal protective equipment (whether it is from factories or wholesale international hubs) as well as stockpiling requests from certain Member States, are putting at risk the overall delivery to those countries worst hit by the pandemic. These trade restrictive measures also increase the risk of retaliation by Europe's trading partners, threatening to worsen the situation for European patients, citizens and the economy.

- Secondly, we believe that **no effort should be spared in keeping essential services, infrastructure and manufacturing sites open all over Europe**. To this end, companies urgently need clear guidelines – including better definition of critical infrastructure – reflecting the diversity of industries that are essential for a synchronised and harmonised response to the crisis. For this effort to succeed, we stress the importance of considering as critical and essential: sites, services and supply chains associated with manufacturing of personal protective equipment; medical products, hygiene and sanitation products; infrastructure and transportation; logistics and delivery services; IT and ICT; energy, communications, food and agriculture; chemicals (raw materials, industrial and consumer); nuclear facilities; the operation of dams, water and wastewater treatment; emergency services; and the aviation, security, space and defence industrial base. We also believe that it is necessary for any of these considerations to cover workers, including cross-border, needed to maintain the continuity of these manufacturing functions and associated supply chains.

AmCham EU is striving to play its part in contributing to address the current crisis. We have launched a [portal](#) to act as a source of information for our stakeholders and to highlight what our member companies are doing to support governments in their efforts to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also been coordinating at Member State level through our ‘AmChams in Europe’ network to share information and best practices.

We are looking forward to engage with you during the meeting with the AmCham EU Executive Council on 28 April 2020. In the meantime, we remain at your disposal for any support that we can provide. Please do not hesitate to contact us or Francesca Risso, Policy Adviser, (FRI@amchameu.eu) at the AmCham EU secretariat.

Yours sincerely,



Maxime Bureau
Chairman
AmCham EU



Susan Danger
CEO
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