

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 24, 2020

The Honorable Donald Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

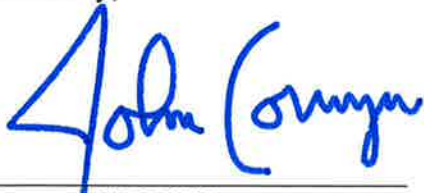
Mr. President:

It is our understanding that the State of Texas, through the Office of the Governor, has made a formal request for a major disaster declaration as a result of the spread of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus, or COVID-19. As you know, Governor Abbott declared a State of Disaster in Texas on March 13, 2020. He has also taken swift action to support local communities dealing with the outbreak. Unfortunately, the size and severity of the outbreak is so significant that the State of Texas is no longer able to effectively respond without federal assistance.

On March 19, the Commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services issued a “public health disaster” for the first time in over 100 years. As of March 24, there are more than 352 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and eight resulting fatalities. Our state and local officials recognize the growing threat of the virus to their constituents and have submitted nearly 500 local disaster declarations. Of particular concern is a growing lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) for nurses, first responders, and other heroes who have risen to the occasion. As the number of confirmed cases rise, Texas faces shortages of medical personnel, hospital beds, and medical equipment, especially ventilators.

Federal assistance is necessary to save lives, protect public health, and lessen the threat of an even larger disaster. We respectfully urge you to support this request and provide any and all emergency measures afforded by the approval of a disaster declaration. We stand prepared to assist you in any way possible to ensure prompt evaluation of this request. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our offices with any questions.

Sincerely,



JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator



TED CRUZ
United States Senator

cc: Administrator Peter T. Gaynor