For Release April 13, 2020

Contacts: Sam Patrick, 864.787.0820
spatrick@scbio.org

Channing Childers, 864.414.6252
cchilders@scmep.org

South Carolina Launches COVID-19 Emergency Supply Portal to Connect Providers with Organizations in Need

SCMEP, South Carolina Hospital Association, SC Department of Commerce and SCBIO combine to source critical medical supplies and get them to parties in need quickly

South Carolina – **April 13, 2020** – A collaboration between ***SCMEP***, the ***SC Hospital Association***, the ***SC Department of Commerce*** and ***SCBIO*** has resulted in the expedited launch of a new online ***South Carolina Emergency Supply Collaborative web portal***.

Located at www.SCCOVID19.org, the portal connects parties in need of essential supplies and equipment with those that can provide it in quickly and efficiently. It allows industry and community partners with the ability to quickly produce, source, test, certify or contribute critical medical supplies (such as face shields, gowns, ventilators and masks) to directly connect with the healthcare providers, first responders and members of industry in search of those essential supply needs in one easy step.

Manufacturers able to expand or pivot their production lines, suppliers and distributors with access to ready-made supplies, organizations able to donate supplies or personal protective equipment (PPE) can identify the supplies and equipment they can offer in the site's central repository. Once quickly reviewed and vetted by a team from the collaborative, organizations in need of the materials will be digitally connected through the portal to secure their desired goods from providers directly.

The need for the portal was identified after members of the collaborative began individually fielding hundreds of calls from organizations in need of such supplies, said Chuck Spangler, President of the South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership (SCMEP).

"Each of our respective organizations has strong and indelible positions as sources of information, connection and aid to our respective constituencies, so it was logical for those parties – whether hospitals or manufacturers, existing industry or life sciences organizations – to turn to us in time of need," said Mr. Spangler. "After sharing among ourselves the flood of requests we were individually receiving and trying to manage, we determined that a combined approach would offer greatest value and efficiency for our state and its citizens, and the creation of the ***South Carolina COVID-19 Emergency Supply portal*** was quickly underway."

The site identifies *critical need items* as evidenced by industry, healthcare, first responder and governmental audiences across the state, and allows organizations to quickly enter the type of goods they can provide or manufacture, quantities and production capacity, and supply chain needs or requirements. Once entered and vetted by the SCMEP team, inquiring parties seeking the goods will be connected to the providers through the portal. Organizations then conduct transactions and arrange and plan logistics directly.

"This is a joint effort to recruit community partners with ability to quickly source or provide needed medical supplies to support South Carolina's COVID-19 response," said Thornton Kirby, President and CEO of the SC Hospital Association. "***South Carolina's COVID-19 Emergency Supply website*** will save valuable time and effort in connecting those in need of goods with those who have them… at a time where every minute counts in saving lives and defeating this formidable virus."

The ***COVID-19 Emergency Supply website*** will be updated constantly with new information and opportunities to support South Carolina emergency response efforts. It also links directly to individual websites of the four Collaborative partners, which each provide a host of resources, news, connections and relevant information for businesses and individuals.

"We are all in this together, and I am proud of the South Carolina business community's continued response to serve our state during this unprecedented time," said S.C. Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt. "The COVID-19 Emergency Supply Collaborative's ability to connect manufacturers, suppliers and other organizations with the front-line medical personnel who need these critical items will serve as a valuable resource."

Organizations and individuals can go online 24/7 to identify critical need items or to note what products they can provide or may need, said Sam Konduros, CEO of SCBIO. "We encourage every member of industry, if you have a product that is needed and which you can provide, produce, test, certify or donate, let us know that right now by completing the simple form on the site. And for organizations in need of such items, let us know that right away so that we can get connect you with parties who can help right now."

Visit the new site at https://sccovid19.org/.

# # #