



March 19, 2020

The Honorable Kim Reynolds
Office of the Governor
Iowa State Capitol
1007 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Governor Reynolds,

Thank you for your efforts in the wake of the public health crisis in which we currently find ourselves. We appreciate your leadership and the work of your staff and those who are spending every waking hour keeping us safe.

We're doing our part too. Our members, and the nearly 120,000 Iowans working in the industry are adhering to all public health guidelines set forth by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Iowa Department of Public Health and Environment (IDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

In fact, we are going above and beyond – taking extra precautions to keep our employees safe and protect Iowans. Construction, by nature, is a practice of social distancing. Most projects have workers dispersed on tasks located more than six feet apart.

We are also reaching out to support our community in numerous ways – from food bank contributions to checking in on our seniors and neighbors in need.

Please, we have one simple message: **keep Iowa working.**

While citizens are coping with a variety of restrictions as a result of the health crisis, it is essential that they have access to our professionals to build and maintain essential services like plumbing, electrical, HVAC systems, water/wastewater treatment plants and power generation facilities, hospitals and roads, and provide them shelter.

Aside from providing comfort, this equipment is vital for both health and safety reasons as well volume of productivity, particularly for air filtration and food and medical supply preservation, especially in this time of quarantine. When equipment fails, qualified, licensed personnel must be able to repair or replace it as quickly as possible to ensure continued operations.

Simply put, our work supports the front lines of this crisis – we support hospitals and health care facilities; we support education facilities; we support the transportation system, and, we support first responders.

Stopping our work will have significant, unintended consequences, and contractual implications for not only those on the front line but also for our economy. Work stoppages in this industry will reverberate through financial markets and unwind a network of contracting and employment issues. At a time when the unemployment infrastructure is already being stressed, adding 120,000 more would be catastrophic.

Additionally, it's imperative that permit and inspection personnel at all levels are available to keep these systems operational. If we are to shelter in place, we need to continue to build homes, apartments, and other places of shelter.

Governor, we understand the significance of this health crisis and we fully respect and comply with all restrictions and guidelines. However, we respectfully ask that you allow our industry to continue to do the important work of supporting our front lines and caring for Iowa.

We request that you consider construction an essential service, so that individuals may continue to provide any services or perform any work necessary to the operations and maintenance of "essential infrastructure," including, but not limited to, public works construction, the permitting, inspection, construction, transfer and recording of ownership, of housing and anything incidental thereto, water, sewer, gas, electrical, roads and highways.

Sincerely,

Home Builders Association of Iowa