

Priorities Wisconsin, Committee to Protect Medicare and Retired Healthcare Workers: Respond to Vice President Pence's visit to Madison amid Trump Administration failed coronavirus response

Posted on Tuesday, Apr 21, 2020

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MADISON, Wis. —Today, [Priorities Wisconsin](#), [Committee to Protect Medicare](#) and retired health care workers released the following statement ahead of Vice President Mike Pence's visit to a Madison health care manufacturing facility. Pence's visit comes amid the Trump administration's failed coronavirus response, in which Trump has [questioned](#) the need for more critical supplies and even [suggested](#) medical professionals are stealing supplies. Now, the United States leads the world in coronavirus cases and deaths.

[According](#) to experts, the United States "cannot safely reopen unless it conducts more than three times the number of coronavirus tests it is currently administering." However, the number of tests being performed nationally still isn't growing rapidly — as all experts think is necessary. In fact, over the course of last week, "the number of coronavirus tests analyzed each day by commercial labs in the U.S. [plummeted](#) by more than 30 percent," despite repeated calls by state officials to ramp up testing.

But instead of focusing his efforts to ensure widespread testing is available, Pence, chair of the Coronavirus Task Force, is ignoring federal and [state guidelines](#) advising against non-essential travel and traveling to Madison for a photo op with workers

making ventilators, potentially putting essential workers at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19.

“I’m outraged by the callous incompetence of the Trump administration,” said **Dr. Laurel Mark, a retired physician in Madison, Wisconsin and member of the Committee to Protect Medicare.** “Health care workers risk their lives every day to care for people infected with this new and deadly virus. After months of promises, we only have excuses from the Trump administration about the woeful lack of tests and necessary protection for those on the front lines. Vice President Pence should be in Washington working to fix these problems instead of traveling around and endangering more people. It’s time to put human lives over politics.”

“The doctor and nurses working the front lines of this pandemic know that the lies this administration tells the American people hinders their ability to save as many lives as possible,” said **Lynn Carey, a retired nurse in Germantown, Wisconsin.** “We do not have a good testing system, and we need leadership to tell people to stay home, not rally in the streets making the virus worse. Please keep your platitudes and misinformation to yourself and lead during this crisis. We are watching.”

“Not only is this visit nothing more than a photo op, it’s a reckless decision that could put essential workers at risk of exposure to COVID-19,” said **Cassidy Geoghegan, Wisconsin Outreach Director at Priorities USA.** “If the Trump administration is serious about wanting to open the states back up, they should spend less time playing political games and more time getting tests in the hands of the states and the medical professionals who need them most.”