



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

5/4/2020

Dear Defense Industrial Base Workforce:

During these extraordinary times for our Nation and the world, I would like to recognize your focus and dedication to maintaining the United States' unrivaled defense industrial base. Your commitment has allowed the Department of Defense to not only sustain readiness, but also move forward with modernization.

I have spoken with the President, as well as numerous state and local leaders, and they praise your hard work, sacrifice, and positive mindset. You are engaged in a critical mission, and thanks to your efforts, we will carry on supporting the warfighter, as well as our allies and partners, in the midst of a global health crisis.

I am proud that you embody the following words of former Secretary of Defense, George C. Marshall, whose portrait hangs above my desk, "It is not enough to fight the fight. It is the spirit that we bring to the fight that decides the issue. It is morale that wins the victory." Each of you play a crucial part in the fight against COVID-19 and in maintaining the winning spirit across the supply chain.

We at the Department continue to do everything we can to keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy amid the coronavirus pandemic. We have published guidance addressing reimbursement to contractors for payment to workers due to COVID-19 facility closures or other restrictions, and we have worked to speed up payments to defense contractors, with the expectation that cash will flow to small businesses across the supply chain. I am proud of our senior leaders' efforts to support the workforce, and while there is more work to be done, we remain resolute.

In closing, our priority continues to be protecting people while also ensuring readiness. Please stay safe, stay healthy, and keep up the great work. We are in this together.

Sincerely,

Mark T. Esper