May 19, 2021

Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

On behalf of BioOhio and nearly 300 members that employ over 100,000 Ohioans in the bioscience industry, I am honored to submit a statement for today's hearing *"COVID-19 Part II: Evaluating the Medical Supply Chain and Pandemic Response Gaps."* BioOhio is a nonprofit organization that connects and serves Ohio's bioscience community — medical device, diagnostic testing, drugs and pharmaceuticals, digital health, and agricultural biotechnology — to drive success in improving global quality of life. Since 1987, we have represented a statewide ecosystem that ranges from the individual entrepreneur to some of the largest companies in the world, health systems, and all the professional service providers and supply chain necessary for a company to grow. As we have learned through this pandemic, a supply chain mainly operated outside of the United States can be detrimental in a public health emergency.

BioOhio strongly supports the onshoring and reshoring of personal protective equipment (PPE) as well as access to quick and accurate testing. I would like to share Ohio's bioscience landscape, and how it fits into the greater U.S. picture for surveillance, testing, diagnostics, PPE manufacturing, etc. and offer some specific suggestions we believe officials should take to correct failures for the future and improve our pandemic preparedness. Ohio remains a strong bioscience manufacturing state and is particularly strong in medical devices and diagnostics. Three examples of the numerous Ohio companies that provided critical products during the pandemic are:

Quidel - Manufacturing in southeast Ohio, Quidel operates at the forefront of the battle against the coronavirus pandemic. Quidel received Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the FDA for its Lyra® SARS-CoV-2 Assay, a real-time RT-PCR test intended for the qualitative detection of nucleic acid from COVID-19 on March 17, 2020. Lyra® is a leading molecular test for COVID-19. On May 8, 2020, Quidel was first to market in the U.S. with a rapid antigen test that delivers results in 15 minutes. Quidel's Sofia® SARS Antigen FIA set the bar for antigen test accuracy, proving to be in agreement with PCR results 96.7% of the time.

Meridian Biosciences - Based in southwest Ohio, Meridian Biosciences is a provider of diagnostic testing solutions and life science raw materials. In January 2020, Meridian Biosciences stock price went up because of their product called Lyo-Ready 1-Step RtaPCR Mix. In layman's terms, the mix is a screening kit for Coronavirus. But it's not just that - it's a screening kit that's faster and cheaper than most of its competitors, of which there are few. Skipping to February 2021, Meridian announced that it would increase production capacity of the company's SARS-CoV-2 molecular diagnostic test on its Revogene® platform after receiving a $5.5M award from the National Institute of Health (NIH) Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics (RADxSM) initiative and an additional grant from JobsOhio.

GOJO - Based in northeast Ohio, their most visible product is PURELL. Adding two more sites in Ohio in 2020-2021, bringing the company's Ohio manufacturing facilities to four, GOJO employs more than 2,500 team members around the globe and is expecting to add at least 200 jobs with these two additional Ohio facilities.

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These are just three of the many Ohio bioscience companies that stepped up during the pandemic to enhance our state-wide and national response. There are hundreds of medical device and diagnostic companies that have played a role in the response, which can be found here, in BioOhio's online Ohio Bioscience Resource Directory, accessible and searchable 24/7. We are proud of Ohio's bioscience innovation and manufacturing prowess during this crisis, as well as year-round in producing countless life-saving and life-altering medical innovations. We can play an even more significant role in U.S.-made products, and that is why we support the onshoring and reshoring of personal protective equipment (PPE) as well as access to quick, accurate COVID testing.

Manufacturing support systems in Ohio are distinctive. The Ohio Manufacturing Alliance (OMA) is helping manufacturers to learn what types of equipment are most needed and how to adapt current products, operations, and personnel to meet the need. The Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), with its partner organization MAGNET in a lead role, is providing engineering capabilities and technical support to make PPE alternatives when possible. OMA is managing outreach to manufacturers, and The Ohio Hospital Association, and nursing homes are providing insights on the products most needed. Another critical source of economic growth in Ohio is JobsOhio, a private nonprofit economic development organization that helps businesses relocate, expand and prosper in Ohio. JobsOhio provides regional support and financial assistance, where appropriate, to accelerate production and build on the OMA and MAGNET assets.

Regarding the National Stockpile, Ohio is uniquely situated in geographic location and assets that make it notable. More than 59.9% of the U.S. population lives within a 600-mile radius of Ohio and can reach the state in about 8-9 hours. Additionally, the Defense Supply Center located in Columbus is one of three Inventory Control Points of the Defense Logistics Agency, a major material passthrough. We also have the Air Force Research Laboratory in Dayton, a consolidated US Air Force medical command, and NASA Glenn and NASA Plum Brook in Northeast Ohio, where innovative Medical Research and Technology projects continue to shape healthcare. Thus, bridging our innovation and manufacturing capabilities with our geographic location makes Ohio the ideal state to lead in U.S. supply chain production.

In closing, there are some important steps that government can take to improve our pandemic preparedness, such as:

- **Create an IRS Tax Code that is more globally competitive.**
- **Implement incentives to reshoring manufacturing focused on PPE and pandemic-related needs.**
- **Expand or make permanent the R&D tax credit.**
- **Maintain strong intellectual property rights.**
- **Establish Workforce Training Grants for companies expanding capacity in the PPE-related space or shifting their traditional manufacturing to the bioscience industry.**

With more investments and a more competitive environment, the bioscience industry can be better prepared for future pandemics. We can ensure that, should this happen again, our supply chain is robust and more rooted here in the U.S. Please do not hesitate to contact me personally at jlewis@bioohio.com with any questions.

Sincerely

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