



The Honorable Governor JB Pritzker
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62702

April 2, 2020

Dear Governor Pritzker,

I wanted to take a moment to thank you for designating the Illinois oil and natural gas industry as an "essential" industry in your recent shelter-in-place [executive order](#). This has allowed our industry's 14,000 workers carry out necessary day-to-day operations to help the state combat the COVID-19 crisis.

As your executive order correctly acknowledges, it is indeed essential for oil and natural gas workers to be able to execute their daily responsibilities in order to produce and transport the products and services Illinoisans need during these trying times. In addition to providing fuels and manufacturing feedstock necessary to transport and produce essential products and services, oil and natural gas are also critical to providing our healthcare industry the tools it needs to fight this pandemic.

IV bags, ventilator machines, hospital gowns, latex gloves and the [3.5 billion face masks](#) used by medical professionals each year are comprised of or include components of single-use plastics. Doctor's scrubs, sterilization trays and monitors are also made of plastic or include petroleum products. Even hand sanitizers, soaps and some medicines are derived from petroleum, while critical procedures such as X-rays and MRIs would not be possible without oil and gas. Petroleum-based technology such as computers and cell phones also allow an unprecedented number of people to work from their homes and adhere to the social distancing safety precautions you have mandated.

I encourage your staff to reach out at any time for more information on the essential nature of the Illinois oil and natural gas industry and petroleum in general.

Sincerely,

Seth Whitehead
Executive Director, Illinois Petroleum Resources Board