

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 13, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

On February 10, 2020 The Detroit News published an article highlighting the impacts to the supply chain of American automotive firms due to the temporary closure of Chinese factories to contain the spread of coronavirus. Hundreds of thousands of Michigan jobs depend on the auto industry and auto manufacturing and millions of more jobs rely on other Chinese exports. Therefore, we are extremely concerned about the consequences of this ongoing disruption.

Eradicating COVID-19 is, rightfully, the chief priority of the world community. However, we must also work to mitigate the consequences of effectively shutting down the Hubei Province and preventing hundreds of millions of other Chinese people from returning to work. A recent CNBC estimate said these regions accounted for more than 90% of the country's exports. With nearly 20% of Chinese exports sent to the United States how is the Administration coordinating with firms who rely on these exports?

Wuhan is one of China's most important producers of automobiles with United States based firms having large capital investments in the region. How is the Administration working with the automotive sector, which is acutely sensitive to supply chain disruptions?

Moreover, with thousands of estimated cases in each of the cities under quarantine, and daily increases in the number of those infected, there is a strong likelihood that these measures will be extended and even expanded. What contingency plans does the Administration anticipate using should this scenario play out and the region remains unable to reopen factories for foreseeable future? And, what impact would that have the United States economy?

It is imperative that we remain vigilant to contain, eradicate, and understand this threat to prevent its spread and reduce its impact on those afflicted with the virus. Concurrently, we should ensure that the Administration is working with industry to mitigate the impact to U.S. firms and our economy more broadly. We look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,



Fred Upton
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

cc: Hon. Larry Kudlow
Hon. Stephen Biegun