



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Now is the time to leverage investment in our critical infrastructure

The scope of the coronavirus pandemic is something we haven't experienced in our lifetime.

Maintaining the nation's critical infrastructure is essential—not only facilities currently in service, but those that are in development. Retail and food supply chains rely on the capacity of our highways, airports and ports. They must remain open so rail operators, cargo shippers and truckers can deliver much-needed medical supplies, personnel and goods where they are most needed.

The continuity of our power grid, water systems and utilities also cannot be disrupted. Each of these efforts requires national coordination and a will to keep America and Oregon open for business.

In everyday life, engineers are the unseen force that design the modern world and all the associated conveniences we take for granted. In times of crisis, our industry remains an indispensable resource for continuity of government and the economy.

Currently, segments of the engineering industry are working with health care clients to mobilize a response to the coronavirus. They are working with construction firms to design new temporary testing and triage centers and to retrofit existing facilities to handle more hospital beds.

Many engineering firms are working with the lead crisis agencies that are responding on the front lines of the pandemic and have been called into service by FEMA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Oregon Department of Transportation and local governments at a moment's notice.

The partnership between the engineering industry and America's public health and emergency management agencies is critical to help the nation navigate successfully through this new challenge.

However, the decision by several governors to halt infrastructure-related construction projects is counterproductive to the nation's goals and promises to extend this tremendous economic disruption. Now is not the time to shut off these projects—it's time to leverage them further. Continued progress on ongoing infrastructure projects will provide a much needed and strong economic footing when the inevitable recovery commences.

Founded in 1956, the American Council of Engineering Companies of Oregon is 123 member firms strong representing approximately 3,700 employees in Oregon and southwest Washington.

The council's primary goal is protecting the public's welfare and advancing the professional quality of consulting engineers and land surveyors in private practice.

Member of the American Council of Engineering Companies, Washington, D.C.