



# Duckworth Discusses COVID-19's Impact on the Food Supply Chain & Efforts to Ramp Up Personal Protective Equipment Production with Illinois Manufacture

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WASHINGTON, D.C.] – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today spoke with Mark Denzler, President & CEO of the Illinois Manufacturer's Association (IMA), about the COVID-19 crisis, efforts to ramp up production of personal protective equipment and how Illinois's food supply chain is preparing to handle the crisis. IMA represents over 4,000 member companies across Illinois, including companies at all levels of the food supply chain.

"I had a productive discussion with Mr. Denzler about ramping up production of personal protective equipment and the importance of bolstering our state's food supply chain throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic," Duckworth said. "I'll keep working with our hardworking manufacturers and producers to ensure we are doing everything in our power to minimize gaps in production and keep our shelves stocked."

Since the COVID-19 public health crisis began, Senator Duckworth has led with a wide range of actions designed to encourage the Federal Government to better support Americans and help our nation respond to the pandemic, [including supporting the Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) that the President signed into law to push the Trump Administration to refocus its efforts on testing and access to tests. [She introduced the COVID-19 Health Care Worker Protection Act](#) to help keep frontline healthcare workers safe, cosponsored the *Free COVID-19 Testing Act*, which would expand free tests to confirm coronavirus infections, and [helped introduce the comprehensive COVID-19 RELIEF for Small Businesses Act of 2020](#) to help support small businesses across the country and give them the resources they need to weather this crisis and [she helped](#)

[introduce legislation that passed both the House and the Senate](#) to make sure student Veterans and their loved ones receiving benefits through the GI Bill continue receiving full benefits as universities move online. Duckworth also [joined her colleagues](#) on the *PAID Leave Act (Providing Americans Insured Days of Leave Act)* to provide additional support to workers and businesses during the coronavirus outbreak and future public health emergencies and [helped introduce](#) the *Small Business Debt Relief Act of 2020* to ensure every small business with a Small Business Administration (SBA) loan would be relieved of their SBA loan payments.

In addition to her legislative work, Duckworth [joined U.S. Senator Dick Durbin \(D-IL\)](#) [in demanding](#) additional federal resources from the Trump Administration for O'Hare International Airport after hundreds of passengers were forced to wait in close quarters for hours in order to clear medical screenings at customs. She [urged](#) the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to immediately establish clear diagnostic testing procedures, capabilities and production capacity to better mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and [called on Donald Trump](#) to take immediate, concrete and decisive action under the Defense Production Act (DPA) to boost production of critical life-saving ventilators. She [also called](#) on U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to work together to ensure civilian healthcare workers are well-trained to use military-issued respirator masks and other personal protective equipment that DOD has made available to civilian healthcare providers during COVID-19 pandemic. Duckworth [joined a bipartisan group](#) of Senators urging the Trump Administration expand access to telehealth services to rural communities and she [pressed](#) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for information on the potential shortage of enzymes needed for CDC coronavirus test kits. The Senator is [also seeking information](#) from Secretary of Defense Mark Esper about any proactive steps the Department of Defense is taking to ensure the readiness of National Guard and Reserve units to support local civilian authorities as the pandemic spreads.