



October 15, 2014

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Recent news reports have confirmed what many have feared - the Ebola virus has now become active in the United States. With the first death of a patient in Texas and the ensuing confirmation of at least two healthcare workers testing positive for the virus, American workers are now expressing concern for their health and safety.

There is additional concern about the U.S. health care sector's readiness to provide adequate health protections as cases of Ebola begin to emerge. Of paramount concern to health care workers is the availability of enough personal protective equipment (PPE) in hospitals, which is crucial to avoid spread of the disease to workers. The Ebola crisis underscores the need of the health care community to re-emphasize PPE and other safety precautions.

Earlier this week, AIHA sent letters to the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) making the following recommendations:

- Quickly move forward with the delayed infectious disease rule. This rule would provide increased protections and recommendations for America's healthcare workers. The rule is an absolute necessity to assist in controlling this virus.
- Engage with each other and outside stakeholders in efforts to separate the misleading information from the science in how best to protect workers from this virus.

In support of these initiatives, AIHA is urging you to back these efforts and request Congress to appropriate the necessary funds to carry out this important work. Diseases like Ebola create public concern for the health and safety of healthcare workers and it is only a matter of time before this concern spreads to other workers. As an organization, AIHA's members and goals focus on preventing occupational illness and injury as a fundamental principle of the industrial hygiene field. This makes our members uniquely qualified to protect worker health, as AIHA plays a unique role at the crossroads of manufacturers, practitioners, and the government. As the crisis evolves, AIHA believes that the role of industrial hygienists will become increasingly important as more and more workers become concerned.

If AIHA can be of any further assistance, please contact me. Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Peter O'Neil". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke extending across the middle of the name.

Peter O'Neil
AIHA Executive Director