

# Preparing for the Next Pandemic: To create a USA-based Supply Chain of Next Gen Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)



# The Challenge

More than 3,600 US healthcare workers died from COVID-19. Many of their deaths could have been prevented with better pandemic preparedness.

**Given the uncomfortably high likelihood of another respiratory pandemic in the near future, the PPE supply gap is a major threat to worker safety that could put millions of lives at risk.**



# What should be done?

**We should stop turning to disposable N95s as our default pandemic protection device.**

- Disposable N95s are unwieldy, uncomfortable, wasteful, and not nearly as protective as they could be—and there are better alternatives.
- Reusable respirators can save hospitals money, too: two of the facilities that used elastomeric respirators in 2020, Allegheny Health Network and the University of Maryland Medical Center, [published reports](#) demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of elastomeric compared to disposable N95s.



# What should be done?

## Build next-gen PPE

- **We should encourage respirator innovation.** Despite all their virtues, many reusable respirators are still bulky and hard to talk through, and most have exhalation valves that prevent them from being used in healthcare settings. Most reusable respirators were originally designed for industrial uses, like construction or mining, where patient interaction or source control needs weren't factored into the design process.
- **We just need to provide PPE manufacturers with incentives to do so.**



# There is a solution

## **The Make PPE in America Act, passed by Congress in 2021**

- requires the largest US government buyers to purchase their PPE from American sources under long-term contract
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has accordingly implemented a [new rule](#) providing hospitals extra reimbursement for buying American-made respirators.
- These policies provide an opportunity for federal buyers to set innovation targets for reusable respirators and align them with the needs of the private sector, and an extra source of reimbursement that hospitals can use to purchase new respirators.

# What are the essential elements to create effective solutions, let alone public policy?

- Creating a shared vision
  - Create an environment/ethic of collaboration and purpose
  - Align the shared purpose within and across projects
  - Participative collaboration (bottom-up)
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- “Building a Collaborative Community”, Adler, Heckscher, Prusak, Harvard Business Review, July-August, 2011