

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1309

March 20, 2020

## VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

The Honorable Mark Esper  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

The Honorable Mike Pompeo  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Esper, Secretary Pompeo and Secretary Chao:

We are writing today to urgently request that pursuant to the Defense Production Act of 1950 (DPA), the Trump administration activate the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) readiness program.

Specifically, we ask that the U.S. Department of State's State Repatriation Task Force immediately work with U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and civilian air carriers who participate in CRAF, to swiftly expand CRAF readiness program operations to repatriate Americans overseas in countries where commercial flights are not available or accessible.

The President has already publicly stated the DPA was being invoked in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the State Repatriation Task Force should be working with USTRANSCOM, USDOT and industry partners to efficiently execute the broad activation of CRAF chartered air transportation capabilities to countries such as Peru, where many Americans are stranded with no way to come home, including our constituents.

If aircraft made available by domestic air carriers who participate in the CRAF readiness program are not sufficient to bring every American home, we also request that USDOT and DOD search each agency's respective aircraft fleets to identify additional aircraft that could be used to repatriate Americans desperate to come home during this crisis.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our urgent request and we look forward to receiving a timely response on what actions are being taken to activate the CRAF readiness program and mobilize air carriers to provide aircraft to transport Americans from Illinois and throughout the country back to their families and homes safely.

Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator