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**IAPMO CEO Encourages Nation's Governors to Promote Measures
to Maintain Educated, Knowledgeable Plumbing Workforce During COVID-19 Crisis**

Washington, D.C. (March 26, 2020) — IAPMO CEO GP Russ Chaney has sent a letter to Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, Chair of the National Governors Association (NGA), and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, the NGA Vice Chair, to recommend the nation's governors enact a series of measures be taken to maintain an educated and knowledgeable plumbing workforce as one of the nation's 16 critical infrastructure sectors.

A copy of the letter may be read at:

<https://www.iapmo.org/media/23579/letter-to-nga-on-covid-initiatives-for-governors.pdf>.

"The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has listed plumbers and water/wastewater sectors as part of the nation's critical infrastructure," Chaney writes. "These sectors are considered so vital to the United States that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination thereof."

Chaney encourages the following steps be taken:

- In states that require a certain amount of plumbing continuing education be face-to-face, that those states be urged to waive those requirements in favor of all distance learning during this international pandemic. It is vital that everything possible be done to protect the health and safety of practitioners who must still enter homes and places of business for ongoing or emergency services.
- Encourage states to suspend the filing of business returns and the payment of all business taxes for this industry to their state government for the duration of the pandemic. These suspended taxes should include taxes owed for the 2019 tax year, estimated payments for 2020, and all payroll tax obligations. The suspension should be broad and apply to all businesses. When the pandemic is over, the repayment of any deferred taxes should be spread out over time.
- Ensure home water and energy service continuity by asking governors to require that utilities adopt or maintain current policies to prevent the shutoff of electricity, home heating and cooling, and drinking and wastewater services to residential customers during the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- As a number of legislatures across the country are appropriating millions of dollars in addition to federal stimulus funds, governors be encouraged to fund drinking water and wastewater assistance to low-income households which are particularly vulnerable during this pandemic.
- Encourage governors, in applicable states, to issue waivers to state licensing laws to allow out-of-state plumbers, already licensed and in good standing by their jurisdiction, the authority to practice for the purpose of filling emergency gaps during this crisis.
- Encourage states, in their own guidance, to adopt the Federal CISA guidelines for essential businesses recognizing the importance of the plumbing industry and all other sub-sectors of the water/wastewater sectors. It is essential that manufacturing, supply chains and all the processes necessary to bringing products to market in this sector are designated as "essential businesses" to ensure that all components of our water and sanitation systems continue to operate effectively. Water and sanitation is foundational to our nation's response to COVID-19 and the plumbing industry is on the frontlines.

Last week, the White House and Department of Homeland Security identified plumbing industry professionals as indispensable in its *Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce: Ensuring Community and National Resilience in COVID-19 Response*.

Founded in 1908, the National Governors Association (NGA) is the collective voice of the nation's governors and one of Washington, D.C.'s most respected public policy organizations. Its members are the governors of the 55 states, territories and commonwealths. Through NGA, governors identify priority issues and deal collectively with matters of public policy and governance at the state and national levels.

For more information on IAPMO and its proactive initiatives in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, direct your web browser to www.iapmo.org.