

ASOP Global Urges Administration to Act Now to Protect Consumers from Online COVID-19 Scams and Misinformation
ASOP, NCL and 30+ Stakeholder Groups Issue Joint Letter to Vice President, DOJ, FDA, FTC and AGs

WASHINGTON – April 9, 2020 – The [Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies \(ASOP Global\)](#) and more than 30 other public health, trade association, industry, and research groups, including the National Consumers League (NCL) and the Coalition for a Secure and Transparent Internet (CSTI), sent a joint letter today to Vice President Mike Pence, members of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, cabinet officials, and other state and national leaders urging them to take further action to protect consumers from online COVID-19 scams and misinformation.

“ASOP Global appreciates the efforts of the Administration to combat the pandemic,” said Libby Baney, partner at Faegre Drinker and senior advisor to ASOP Global. “But more can and must be done to protect Americans from COVID-19 related scams and counterfeit products. ASOP Global urges the Administration to enact and enforce well-vetted, no-cost policies to create a more transparent and accountable internet. Such reforms would have an immediate and global impact on patient safety during the pandemic and beyond.”

Criminals have long exploited legal loopholes and enforcement blind spots that put individuals at risk online, but the COVID-19 crisis has turned this dangerous practice [deadly](#). As fear and confusion drive consumers to the Internet for relief, criminals have taken quick advantage to peddle fake cures and false hopes through [thousands of websites](#) containing terms such as “covid” and “corona,” promoting and profiting off of misinformation. The COVID-19 pandemic and widespread, longstanding criminal exploitation of an anonymous Internet demonstrate the urgent need to make WHOIS data accessible and hold domain name registrars and registries accountable in order to protect citizens and maintain trust in the Internet.

As academia and industry continue to invest in developing tests, vaccines and cures for COVID-19, it is critical to reign in the epidemic of misinformation that surrounds the virus. In their joint letter, the stakeholders called on the Administration to promote evidence-based solutions, warn the public of the dangers of online scams and misinformation and take swift policy action to protect the health and safety of consumers, both physically and financially. The full letter can be read [here](#).

“We encourage the public to seek out trusted sources for accurate information about COVID-19 and other health issues, like the [Centers for Disease Control](#) and [World Health Organization](#),” said Baney. “ASOP Global’s website also has resources for how to protect yourself and your loved ones [when buying medicine online](#).”

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ABOUT ASOP GLOBAL

The Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP Global), a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. with activities in U.S., Canada, Europe, Latin America and Asia, is dedicated to protecting consumers around the world, ensuring safe access to medications, and combating illegal online drug sellers.