

March 16, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Democratic Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the 83 undersigned organizations that represent hundreds of thousands of businesses that employ millions of employees in various industries across the country, we write to ask you consider improvements to [H.R. 6201](#), the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Our suggested improvements will ensure all American workers have access to paid leave in the face of this public health crisis while also providing relief to businesses and important incentives to sustain access to employer-provided health benefits, on which nearly 180 million Americans depend.

We appreciate Congress and the Administration moving quickly to mitigate the threats COVID-19 poses to public health, our economy, and workers across the country. While the House-passed bill contains critical provisions, including expanded unemployment insurance and increased access to testing, we urge Congress to replace the paid leave mandates with a federal emergency program. The leave mandates in H.R. 6201, which requires businesses with 500 **and fewer** employees to provide 12 weeks of paid leave, presume liquidity and a tolerance for debt that simply does not exist at this time. We fear that these mandates will accelerate small and medium business closures, causing many Americans to lose employer-provided health benefits while straining the administrative and financial resources of state unemployment agencies. Although H.R. 6201 includes tax credits and Treasury Secretary Mnuchin has promised to advance business money, credits will not produce sufficient liquidity in time. We fear the government does not have the infrastructure and businesses do not have the administrative resources to access these advances in the time needed to deter business closures.

A better approach would be a public program administered by the federal government to provide compensation for COVID-19 related leave. One example is the proposed program in [H.R. 6198](#), under which the Social Security Administration (SSA) would provide financial assistance to American workers impacted by COVID-19. SSA is often one of the first agencies on the ground in natural disasters, and it has extensive experience and procedures in place for responding in emergency situations. The legislation includes multiple protections to ensure that Social Security funds are not diverted to the new emergency leave program. Other agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Labor, could also administer a program using unemployment insurance to provide compensation for leave, and we encourage Congress to also consider that agency and unemployment insurance as an option for relief.

While we understand such programs would impose significant costs on the government, this investment now will prevent far greater costs in the future, including increased unemployment and Medicaid costs as well as hardship for American workers and businesses alike. We believe a federally administered program is needed to provide critical income to workers and liquidity to businesses which will help our economy weather this storm by encouraging businesses to keep employees “on the books.” This will help ensure continuation of employer provided benefits, especially health care benefits.

On behalf of the 83 undersigned organizations, we urge you to consider this change and thank you for moving swiftly and decisively to help American workers, their families, and the businesses that employ them. We stand ready to work with you at this critical moment.

Sincerely,

Air Conditioning Contractors of America  
Alabama Tire Dealers Association  
Alaska Hotel & Lodging Association  
American Dental Association  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Foundry Society  
American Horticulture Industry Association  
American Hotel and Lodging Association  
American International Automobile Dealers Association  
American Moving & Storage Association  
American Staffing Association  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
Arkansas Hospitality Association  
Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce  
Asian American Hotel Owners Association  
Associated Builders and Contractors  
Associated Builders and Contractors South Texas Chapter  
Associated Builders and Contractors Southern California Chapter  
Associated Builders and Contractors Texas Gulf Coast Chapter  
Associated General Contractors  
Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industry  
Auto Care Association  
Automotive Aftermarket Association of the Mid-South, Inc.  
Automotive Aftermarket Association Southeast  
Automotive Oil Change Association  
Building Service Contractors Association International  
Capital Associated Industries (NC)  
Coalition of Franchisee Associations  
Council of Automotive Repair  
Distribution Contractors Association

Equipment Dealers Association  
Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association  
Foodservice Equipment Distributors Association  
Franchise Business Services  
Global Cold Chain Alliance  
HospitalityMaine  
HR Policy Association  
Independent Bakers Association  
Independent Electrical Contractors  
International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions  
International Association of Plastics Distribution  
International Council of Shopping Centers  
International Foodservice Distributors Association  
International Franchise Association  
International Sign Association  
International Warehouse Logistics Association  
ISSA - The Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association  
Kentucky-Indiana Automotive Wholesalers  
Littler Workplace Policy Institute  
Manufactured Housing Institute  
Metals Service Center Institute  
Moore Erection, L.P.  
National Association of Electrical Distributors  
National Association of Truckstop Operators  
National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors  
National Athletic Trainers' Association  
National Automobile Dealers Association  
National Community Pharmacists Association  
National Demolition Association  
National Franchisee Association  
National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association  
National Retail Federation  
National Small Business Association  
National Tooling and Machining Association  
New England Tire & Service Association  
New Jersey Gasoline, C-Store, Automotive Association  
New York State Automotive Aftermarket Association  
NFIB  
Ohio Equipment Distributors Association  
Ormsby Insurance Agency Inc.  
Power Transmission Distributors Association  
Precision Machined Products Association  
Precision Metalforming Association  
SNAC International

Society for Human Resource Management  
Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association  
Springfield Regional Chamber  
Texas Hotel & Lodging Association  
Tree Care Industry Association  
TRSA – The Linen, Uniform and Facility Services Association  
United Equipment Dealers Association  
United Motorcoach Association  
Washington, Maryland, Delaware Service Station and Automotive Repair Association  
Western Electrical Contractors Association