



March 19, 2020

The Honorable Larry Hogan
Chair
National Governors Association
444 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 267
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Governor Hogan:

National emergencies require us to move beyond business as usual and come together as a nation. Our government must act with urgency. And leaders of the largest, most powerful corporations must look past their bottom lines to do what's right for all working people.

On behalf of millions of service and healthcare workers on the front lines of this crisis, we demand immediate action by major industries and corporations to secure the health, safety, and long-term economic well-being of America's workers, regardless of where they work, their race, their immigration status, or current healthcare coverage.

1. **Fully-funded, accessible healthcare for every worker, including paid leave and 100%-paid testing and treatment for COVID-19.** Corporations must provide full healthcare coverage to direct and franchise employees and contractors. Any uninsured person should automatically be enrolled in Medicaid. Every worker must be covered by permanent, comprehensive paid leave policies, providing immediate access to 12 weeks' leave at full pay for workers who are sick, mandated to stay home, or caring for loved ones.
2. **Job, wage, and economic security for every worker.** Establish industry funds to fully reimburse wages lost by workers whose hours or jobs have been cut or cut back. These funds must cover direct and franchise employees and contractors, compensate tipped workers at a rate of at least \$15 an hour, and provide regular payments. Industries must provide easily accessed emergency child care funds, debt-relief, and housing assistance.
3. **Immediate investment in the health and safety of every worker.** Provide emergency relief for states to hire and train healthcare workers and first responders, and expand healthcare, long term care, and child care coverage. Corporations and industries should take aggressive, immediate measures to ensure clean, safe, sanitary work environments and protection from infection during this health crisis, with continuing access to personal protective equipment and training.
4. **Working families at the center of every emergency relief package.** Elected leaders of every party must act to put the health, safety, and financial well-being of workers first. Any industry relief or bailout must prioritize healthcare and financial support for workers over executive pay, shareholders, or profits. Relief efforts must directly address the disproportionate impact of economic and health crises on Black, brown, Asian Pacific Islander, and immigrant workers.

State workers are on the frontlines working together to defeat this historic and deadly pandemic as health care providers and first responders who are diagnosing and caring for the sick as well as disseminating critical information in our communities about how we can best keep our families safe and healthy. To more fully address the needs of workers in



the public sector who right now are responding to the biggest crisis our country has seen in years, we are calling on you specifically to address the concerns of state workers by ensuring governors take the following action:

- Hire additional staff to safely conduct cleaning and inspections and to administer public programs experiencing surging demand. Ensure these workers receive workplace protections, and that health and safety guidelines are strictly enforced.
- Provide paid administrative leave to workers instructed by medical or public health officials to stay home for precautionary reasons or who need to stay home to take care of children whose schools or child care facilities are closed or elderly family members.
- Ensure schools, correctional facilities, and other widely used public buildings have access to necessary cleaning supplies and protective equipment and staff receive proper health and safety training.
- Require telework options for all but the most essential public-facing city, state and federal employees.
- Mandate paid leave for public employees who cannot work remotely during facility closures.
- Make COVID-19 illness eligible for workers' compensation claims by frontline workers -- including workers who have close contact (greater than six feet) with persons exhibiting symptoms of respiratory infection and workers who have frequent contact with travelers or members of the general public.

Protecting all workers is the patriotic and moral requirement of this moment, and always.

Signed,

Mary Kay Henry, International President
Service Employees International Union