

NAM COVID-19 Update
May 13, 2020

Manufacturers' need for targeted liability protections has Congress's attention. Yesterday, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on this critical issue, and the NAM ensured every member of the committee heard from the [coalition of 289 associations](#) that the NAM brought together to call for reform. But it is clear based on statements from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle that they still need to hear directly from companies and associations based in their states about why safe harbors are important for essential companies that continued to operate and for those that will soon reopen.

Take Action: Tell Congress to Pass Liability Protections

You can [use this tool](#) to tell Congress that manufacturers that have stayed on the job and worked to enact safeguards for employees deserve protections against bad-faith coronavirus-related lawsuits. Essential manufacturers should not be punished for doing the right thing. Companies that take action should look for a follow-up from the NAM on how they can get more involved on this critical issue.

Guidance on PPP Loan Evaluation and Safe Harbors

Today, the Small Business Administration issued new guidance related to the recent [announcement](#) that the SBA will review certain Paycheck Protection Program loans to evaluate the applicant's economic need for the loan. Under the new guidance, businesses receiving PPP loans of less than \$2 million will be eligible for a safe harbor that deems their loan request to have been made in good faith; as such, **loans below \$2 million will not be subject to further review**. Borrowers with loans greater than \$2 million "may still have an adequate basis" for applying for a PPP loan based on their individual circumstances, but they will be subject to SBA review to determine the necessity of the loan request. If the review determines that the applicant should not have received PPP funds, the SBA will seek repayment of the outstanding PPP loan balance and will inform the lender that the borrower is not eligible for loan forgiveness. For more information, you can review Question 46 in the SBA's updated [PPP FAQ document](#).

House Democrats Release HEROES Act

House Democratic leadership yesterday released their latest legislative package in response to the COVID-19 crisis. The legislation, called the HEROES Act, is an 1,800-page, \$3 trillion bill, which the House is scheduled to vote on Friday. This legislation is viewed as the Democrats' opening bid in negotiations over the next round of COVID-19 response legislation. While the HEROES Act is not anticipated to become law, it should kickstart negotiations over the coming weeks. You can read more about this bill [here](#).

Call to Action for PPE to Reopen the Economy

Over the past few months, many NAM members have stepped up to provide or produce personal protective equipment for frontline health care workers. The reopening of the economy is creating a massive need for even more PPE across all sectors. So we have now extended a call to action from the administration to companies that responded to previous NAM PPE surveys so that they can provide input on how the private sector can meet this rapidly growing need. If you did not respond to earlier surveys but are interested in answering this call to action, please click [here](#).

Mexico Outlines Plans for Manufacturing Reopening

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has announced that Mexico will lift restrictions on critical businesses in the coming days. The construction, mining and transportation manufacturing sectors will be added to Mexico's list of essential activities and allowed to reopen on May 18, and shuttered companies in other sectors will be allowed to reopen on June 1, subject to region-specific conditions. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for details on the announcement. This is evidence that manufacturers' voices have broken through, following the NAM-led [letter](#) to President López Obrador last month from 326 manufacturing executives. As Mexico reopens more manufacturing sectors in the coming weeks, it will be critical that manufacturers continue to commit to take all necessary measures to protect the lives of employees across Mexico, which will help ensure that manufacturing facilities will be able to stay open. I appreciate U.S. Trade Ambassador Bob Lighthizer's hard work on this issue, which we were able to support with the stories and feedback we received from NAM members. The NAM will continue to engage directly with the U.S. and Mexican governments to ensure that Mexico takes the necessary concrete steps. If you have questions, you can continue to contact NAM Senior Director of International Economic Affairs [Ken Monahan](#) regarding NAM efforts in Mexico and globally.

NAM Leads Call for Digital Infrastructure Investment; Your Feedback Needed

We know that manufacturers are depending on broadband more than ever during this time, which is why we [called on](#) the Senate Commerce Committee to act on our "[American Renewal Action Plan](#)" recommendations for digital infrastructure investment ahead of a [hearing](#) on "The State of Broadband Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic" this week. Your perspective will also be valuable as we continue this effort, so I hope you will contact NAM Director of Innovation Policy [Stephanie Hall](#) to share your perspective on how connectivity is impacting your work and your future plans for digital transformation.

NAM and Partners Press for Pension Reform

Many members have told us how important targeted pension reforms will be to weather this crisis. As part of ongoing advocacy to deliver these reforms, the NAM has joined with dozens of organizations and companies to [urge Congress to include](#) relief for single-employer defined benefit pension plan sponsors in the next phase of COVID-19 legislation.

Please keep visiting the regularly updated nam.org/coronavirus site for the latest information, including operational guidance, our policy plans and resources and an [updated breakdown of state and local orders](#).

Best,

Jay

President and CEO
National Association of Manufacturers