

TO: NAW Direct Members

FROM: NAW Government Relations Team

**RE: NAW Critical Update Number 78 – July 14 at 2:30 PM**

## **1. Latest on Congressional Pandemic Response and Unemployment Benefits Extension**

According to an article in *Bloomberg*, Senate Republicans are on track to finish their own plan for a new round of pandemic relief as early as next week and only then will open negotiations with Democrats as the last stimulus begins running dry and a resurgence of Covid-19 cases threatens a deeper recession. Senate Republicans and the White House agree that the bill must contain liability protections for businesses that re-open, and work on the language of that proposal continues this week.

Another difficult element in the talks will be whether to extend a \$600-per-week boost to unemployment benefits approved by Congress in March that expires July 31.

The weekly \$600 pays many workers more to remain unemployed than they would earn returning to work. Many employers – including many NAW members – report that the bonus payment has made it difficult for them to hire or re-hire workers.

Democrats have sought to extend the extra unemployment insurance into March of next year with possible phase-outs linked to improving state economic numbers. Senate Leader McConnell has called that bonus a “mistake,” and many Republicans say it’s providing a perverse incentive for workers to remain unemployed since they earn more when out of work.

To read the full *Bloomberg* article, click [HERE](#).

Yesterday, *Roll Call* reported that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said an extension of unemployment insurance must be part of any new package. Speaking on CNN on Sunday, Speaker Pelosi said an extension of unemployment benefits must be part of any new package. “We have to find a compromise because we must extend it,” she said, though Speaker Pelosi didn’t specifically insist on the \$600 weekly figure in her comments. Today, Speaker Pelosi said that she will delay the House’s August recess if the time is needed to reach a deal to renew enhanced unemployment benefits and other coronavirus relief.

Two top Democratic economic officials, former Obama administration Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and Jason Furman, who served as Council of Economic Advisers Chairman, have recommended a \$400 weekly benefit. Furman and Geithner, along with former George W. Bush Administration CEA Chairman Glenn Hubbard, have also proposed a “hiring bonus” for those returning to work, similar to what some GOP Senators have advocated.

To read the full *Roll Call* article click [HERE](#).

## **2. Issues Unrelated to COVID-19**

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has extended their emergency declaration relaxing hours of service rules for a third time. The emergency declaration is now in effect through August 14<sup>th</sup>.

As we have previously reported, on March 13<sup>th</sup>, FMCSA issued an emergency declaration that suspended hours of service (HOS) regulations for operators of commercial motor vehicles that are providing emergency relief through direct assistance to support state and local efforts to combat the COVID-19 outbreak.

The current declaration extension is modified to define direct assistance as limited to the transportation of (1) livestock and livestock feed; (2) medical supplies and equipment relating to the testing, diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19; and (3) supplies and equipment necessary for community safety, sanitation, and prevention of community transmission of COVID-10 such as masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, soap and disinfectants.

You can read the full the FMCSA emergency declaration [HERE](#).

## **3. Latest on Economic Recovery and Re-Opening the Workplace**

As the Coronavirus Pandemic continues to impact the United States economy and businesses across the nation, it can be hard to decipher how new regulations and laws may impact your business. To help you manage these issues NAW is providing information about reports, webinars and seminars that you may find useful:

**Stateside Associates** publishes a daily report about State and Local Government responses to the evolving situation.

To read their latest report, click [HERE](#).

We are also providing a link to a spreadsheet that includes state and local COVID-19 response information provided by **MultiState Associates**.

To view their spreadsheet, click [HERE](#).

[Click here](#) for links to Critical Updates sent previously.

Many thanks—

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