Good afternoon,

First and foremost, thank you for your work to support our local economies which make Texas a leader in a variety of industries. As many of you are sorting through news updates about COVID-19, I want to ensure you have access to information that will directly impact local businesses that keep our communities strong.

On Saturday, Congressman Carter supported H.R. 6201 the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which provides resources for businesses that are currently navigating the growing need for paid family and medical leave. This legislation ensures that American workers can take paid sick or family leave, while also providing free diagnostic testing for COVID-19. Through tax provisions and additional funds, we are prioritizing families and small businesses to keep our country going.

As business owners reach out for guidance, I wanted to share a few FAQs that may help assist your members.

**Small Business FAQs:**

*I’m worried my small business will have to close due to financial issues. Will there be more assistance?*

Secretary Mnuchin has made clear immediate assistance is on the way. Moreover, H.R. 6047— the first Coronavirus bill— allowed $1 billion in loan subsidies to be made available to help small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small aquaculture producers, and nonprofit organizations which have been impacted by financial losses as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. This funding could enable the Small Business Administration to provide an estimated $7 billion in loans to these entities. In addition, provides $20 million to administer these loans.

**Impacted small businesses should register with the Texas Division of Emergency Management first. This registration allows counties to meet the threshold of eligibility for funds. To access the registration worksheet, click [here](#). Once counties meet the requirements, businesses can receive funds if they apply. Businesses must apply for assistance [here](#).**

*My small business can’t afford to pay sick leave.*

H.R. 6201— the second Coronavirus bill, as passed by the House — includes a refundable payroll tax credit to reimburse—dollar-for-dollar—local businesses for paid sick leave and family and medical leave wages paid to employees that are affected by COVID-19.

*The leave is fully funded by the tax credit, but my small business will be interrupted by cash flow issues.*

H.R. 6201 provides significant relief to businesses that otherwise may not be able to afford the employee costs associated with coronavirus-related paid leave. Treasury has broad regulatory authority to advance funds to employers to protect businesses concerned about cash flow. In a March 14th [press release](#), Treasury stated that “employers will be able to use cash deposited with the IRS to pay sick leave wages. Additionally, for businesses that would not have sufficient taxes to draw from, Treasury will use its regulatory authority to make advances to small businesses to cover such costs.”

*The legislation exempts businesses with more than 500 employees from mandated paid leave while imposing the requirement on small- and medium-sized job creators.*
The benefits under H.R. 6201 are not an expense for the business, rather it operates as a benefit to both the worker and the employer. The legislation will ensure that every dollar of leave that an employer is required to pay is reimbursed—dollar-for-dollar—by the federal government. It will allow workers to care for themselves and loved ones impacted by coronavirus. Additionally, the credit will help businesses to stay up and running. After all, workers who knowingly show up sick jeopardize the health of coworkers and business operations.

Nearly 90% of businesses with more than 500 employees offer paid sick leave to their full-time workers. To facilitate more universal coverage of paid sick leave, H.R. 6201 provides temporary federal coverage for paid sick and family leave to all employers with fewer than 500 employees.

**Does the bill mandate an unaffordable extension of FMLA on my small business?**

H.R. 6201 as passed by the House permits the Secretary of Labor to exempt businesses with fewer than 50 employees from the longer-term mandate where it creates significant hardship.

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**Other Commonly Asked Questions**

**Access to Unemployment Insurance**

CLICK HERE to download a PDF of the above chart.
What flexibility is there for states to offer unemployment insurance now to individuals that have lost their job or are unable to work due to COVID-19 crisis?

DOL has issued guidance which explains flexibility states have to provide unemployment benefits when:

• An employer temporarily ceases operations due to COVID-19, preventing employees from coming to work;
• An individual is quarantined with the expectation of returning to work after the quarantine is over; and
• An individual leaves employment due to a risk of exposure or infection or to care for a family member.

To find out details on your Texas’ unemployment insurance program, visit DOL’s website here.

Below are updated websites from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that you may refer business and community leaders to:

- Guidance for Businesses and Employers from CDC
- What do if you are sick

Representative Carter and his office are closely monitoring all updates as they relate to our local needs to keep our homes, schools and businesses healthy and strong.

Together, we will get through this.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Best,

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