March 26, 2020

To: PMA Minnesota Members

On Wednesday, March 25, 2020, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz issued an executive order to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by requiring all non-essential businesses close their physical workplaces and facilities and for residents to stay in their homes except to engage in essential activities or to work in critical sectors. The order takes effect on Friday, March 27 at 11:59 p.m. and is set to last through 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 10, 2020.

This follows similar action taken by numerous other states such as California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Under the order, businesses designated as in “Critical Sectors” may continue operations, but employees are only exempt if they are performing work that cannot be done at their homes or residences through telework.

After working with the White House last week to develop a set of national guidelines, PMA's advocacy team in Washington, D.C., succeeded in lobbying to have Minnesota and several other states adopt a federal definition of Critical Manufacturing for those businesses permitted to continue operations.

The Minnesota order incorporates the Department of Homeland Security CISA list of Critical Infrastructure Workers when designating the Critical Sectors exemptions. That federal DHS definition on which PMA lobbied to help establish includes “medical supply chains, and for supply chains associated with transportation, energy, communications, food and agriculture, chemical manufacturing, nuclear facilities, the operation of dams, water and wastewater treatment, emergency services, and the defense industrial base. Additionally, workers needed to maintain the continuity of these manufacturing functions and associated supply chains” (see Critical Manufacturing page 10). Defense subcontractors are also included (see Defense Industrial Base page 11).

The list of Critical Sectors may be clarified by the Governor as needed. All clarifications will be available at http://mn.gov/deed/critical. If you believe that your company should be designated as in a Critical Sector and is not included in the CISA list or the state’s list of Critical Sectors by 4-digit NAICS industry code, you can apply for a specific exemption.

To help provide relief for small businesses, the state has been approved by the Small Business Administration (SBA) for companies seeking disaster loans for up to $2 million. Additional information and resources for businesses and employers can be found through the state’s online portal.
Following conversations with members and a survey of companies last week, our team in Washington, D.C. submitted to the White House and Congress a list of **10 recommendations** to support manufacturers during the COVID-19 economic recovery process, several of which are included in the stimulus bill that passed the Senate last night. Our recommendations included solutions to help with cash flow, prompt payment terms to suppliers for companies receiving federal funds, ensuring banks do not revoke existing lines of credit, and making sure manufacturers have the resources to continue operations and quickly ramp up production after the crisis wanes.

The bill, which is expected to be voted on by the House tomorrow, includes $367 billion for small businesses, those defined as having fewer than 500 employees. This proposal includes allowing eligible companies to receive zero interest "business interruption loans" to pay employees, rent or mortgages that are backed by the SBA, with loan forgiveness contingent on keeping workers on the payroll. The bill also includes an expansion of Net Operating Loss and several other provisions requested by the association.

The situation is very fluid and, while PMA is a national organization, we are mobilizing all of our resources to assist our members throughout the country. Working with our advocacy team in Washington, D.C., we have created [www.onevoiceinfo.org](http://www.onevoiceinfo.org) as a one-stop resource for members to find links to the latest OSHA, CDC and local government resources, including workplace safety posters to print.

Please feel free to reach out to us at any time with questions.