

# Minnesota Business Organizations Supporting COVID-19 Response

March 19, 2020

Dear Governor Walz, Speaker Hortman, Majority Leader Gazelka, Minority Leader Kent and Minority Leader Daudt:

We are writing as a group of more than 60 organizations who represent businesses of various sizes and industries across the state. Thank you for your leadership as we navigate the unprecedented challenges caused by COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

Our member organizations are working to help businesses throughout Minnesota keep their operations going, assist employees and mitigate losses during this difficult time. We are working to understand the impacts that COVID-19 will have on our economy as a whole, and urge you to take steps within your power to offer immediate support to Minnesota's businesses, so they can continue to maintain operations.

As the state considers additional actions to limit the spread of COVID-19, we urge that any new Executive Orders or action by the Legislature not inadvertently cause harm to employers and important services that support critical elements of our state's economy.

In addition, please consider the following recommendations:

- Match the 90 day federal extension of the April 15 income tax payment for 2019 tax year and 2020 first quarter estimated payment for Minnesota income taxes, including a waiver of interest and penalties. Over 90 percent of businesses file their business taxes as pass-through entities through their individual income tax returns.
- Provide an extension for the May 15 property tax payment with a waiver of interest and penalties.
- Allow for an extension in the sales tax remittance for the February and March payments (currently due on March 20 and April 20) for industries hardest hit from closure requirements to contain the spread of this virus including those that have voluntarily closed down. We appreciate the extension of March payment for businesses impacted by Executive Order 20-04 and urge expansion of the extension.
- Ensure that distributing relief through the Small Business Administration low-interest federal disaster loans for working capital to small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the COVID-19 virus is prioritized, including additional or dedicated staff as necessary to ensure immediate delivery.
- Provide a quick refund request option for businesses that have overpaid estimated taxes in Minnesota. This is currently allowed at the federal level (Federal Form 4466).
- Waive or delay other state-imposed fees and deadlines, such as general business or industry specific annual licensing fees and application and renewal deadlines, until December 30, 2020.
- Establish a state fund to help defray the out of pocket costs that Minnesotans with high deductible health insurance plans may face when seeking treatment for the COVID-19 virus.
- Regarding unemployment insurance, allow any claims made related to the COVID-19 virus to not be counted against employers' experience rating in the short term. In the long term, ensure employers do not bear the cost of replenishing the UI Trust Fund once the pandemic has ended.

These recommendations from the business community are actionable and timely. As noted above, we urge careful consideration of additional suspension of private sector business activity and the potential for corresponding drop in sales revenue. Without revenue, many businesses are unable to meet financial commitments and sustain employment.

As this shared public emergency continues to develop, we appreciate your consideration for the hundreds of thousands of job creators who are trying their best to continue business operations and critical services that consumers expect. Thank you for your leadership and support.

Sincerely,

Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber  
Apple Valley Chamber  
Associated General Contractors of MN  
Austin Area Chamber  
Bemidji Area Chamber  
Brainerd Lakes Area Chamber  
Burnsville Area Chamber  
Cannon Falls Area Chamber of Commerce  
Dakota County Regional Chamber  
Destination Waconia  
Duluth Area Chamber  
Eden Prairie Chamber  
Edina Chamber of Commerce  
Elk River Chamber  
Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce  
Faribault Area Chamber  
Fergus Falls Area Chamber of Commerce  
Grand Rapids Chamber  
Greater Mankato Growth  
Hastings Area Chamber  
Hibbing Area Chamber  
Hospitality Minnesota  
Housing First Minnesota  
Insurance Federation of Minnesota  
International Falls Area Chamber  
La Crescent Area Chamber  
Lakeville Area Chamber  
Litchfield Area Chamber  
Lonsdale Chamber  
Marshall Area Chamber  
Medical Alley Association

Metro North Chamber  
Minnesota AgriGrowth Council  
Minnesota Bankers Association  
Minnesota Beverage Association  
Minnesota Chamber of Commerce  
Minnesota Forest Industries  
Minnesota Recruiting and Staffing Association  
Minnesota Retailers Association  
Minnesota Trucking Association  
Minnesota Utility Contractors Association  
New Ulm Area Chamber  
Northfield Area Chamber  
Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce  
Pipestone Area Chamber of Commerce  
Redwood Area Chamber  
River Heights Chamber  
Rochester Area Chamber  
Sauk Centre Area Chamber  
Shakopee Chamber  
St. Cloud Area Chamber  
Stillwater Area Chamber  
The Chamber Grand Forks/East Grand Forks  
Twin Cities North Chamber  
TwinWest Chamber  
Waconia Area Chamber  
Waseca Area Chamber  
White Bear Area Chamber  
Willmar Lakes Area Chamber  
Winona Area Chamber  
Woodbury Area Chamber  
Worthington Area Chamber