Dear Members,

As each new day brings more changes, we must continue to pull together to adjust to the “new normal”. We are continuing to find as much information with you to share as possible. Read on for more important updates:

**Please help us gauge impact**
As I mentioned on Sunday, we have prepared a brief survey for you to gauge the impact of this disruption on your business. This email list is large but I ask that ONLY owners/managers or top leaders with the ability to know these answers respond to the survey. I assure you that your answers will be kept in complete confidentiality. This is for us to know how to help you. Please take 5 minutes to respond TODAY. Since this is constantly changing, we may choose to run another one in the future to gauge the change in the situation. Thank you!

**Small Business Assistance**
I wrote to you on Sunday about the SBA disaster relief loans for businesses. There is a process that must be followed in order for the State to access those. We need YOUR help in doing this. Here is an overview of the loans. Here is a link to the “Estimated Disaster Economic Injury Worksheet” that must be submitted by the State to receive the declaration. My understanding is that they are trying to get Worksheets for each County to access as much as possible. If your business may be affected, please fill this out and email back to the address at the top of the page.

**Resources for Employees Affected by Layoffs**
As more businesses are either impacted by layoffs due to COVID-19, remember to share with employees the resources available from the State Department of Job & Family Services regarding unemployment. Here is a great resource page that has a lot of Frequently Asked Questions about unemployment (both for employers and employees) and it is being regularly updated.

**Federal Relief**
I reported on Sunday that Congress had passed a package regarding this, but I was in error. That was only passed by the House of Representatives. We are awaiting action by the Senate and I will continue to update you as this evolves. My apologies for the mistake.

**Additional Resources**
Like most of you, my email inbox is overflowing with emails offering resources during this time. I’m working to sift through them and share the most helpful ones to you. I ran across this one from Google for Small Businesses which has some very good tips on things to think about during this time (for example, you may need to update your hours). Remember, people can apply for benefits without going to the office. That link also has the information they need to do that.

**Our Office**
At this time, we have moved to mainly remote operations, but our team is still hard at work figuring out how to best serve our businesses and our community during this time. When you call the office you’ll get an auto-attendant which will connect you with the team member remotely. I am holding down the fort in the office for the time being with limited hours (9-Noon, 1-4pm) during this time. That may change. For now, if you need something from our office it is best to call first.

**A Few Final Thoughts**
I have had many tough conversations with members who are scared right now. Scared for their livelihood, the health of their employees, and our community. I’ve shared before that I grew up in a family of small business owners. I remember tough conversations around our dinner table when things didn’t look so great. I saw the stress it put on my parents, my uncles, and my grandfather. I can’t say that I’ve exactly been in your shoes, but I can certainly empathize with the tough decisions you are facing right now. Please remember, you’re not alone. There are thousands of business owners in this community, millions across the country facing this exact crisis. We are here to help you, as are many others.

This is not an easy road we are walking together, and it will undoubtedly get tougher before it gets easier. But I encourage you to take a moment to envision the future. We will emerge from this. We will get through it. I believe it with my whole being. I shared a quote from one of my favorite books in my video on Saturday, maybe I will close with it today. From Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring by J. R. Tolkien:

“I wish it need not have happened in my time,” said Frodo.
“So do I,” said Gandalf, “and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.”

We’ll talk again soon! Until then,
Onward!