April 6, 2020

The AEM Board of Directors has identified five areas for the association to take action and provide assistance to member companies in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the equipment manufacturing industry. “AEM will continue with its advocacy efforts, daily updates, webinars, and one-on-one assistance and continuing communications in the coming days and weeks until the Coronavirus crisis is over,” said AEM President Dennis Slater. In addition, the association will continue to offer its many other services and programs to serve member companies as they weather this storm.

NOTE: Please do not miss tomorrow’s (Tuesday, April 7 at 2:00 pm ET) special webinar on the Paycheck Protection Program and tax relief provisions included in the CARES Act. Experts from leading accounting and advisory firm Grant Thornton, LLP will walk you through the programs and answer your questions. Please click here for more information and to add the event to your calendar.

Here are some of the other recent developments:

**AEM Calls for National Manufacturing Strategy**
Today, AEM called on the federal government to develop and implement a comprehensive national strategy to help member companies confront both short-term and long-term challenges, and to strengthen the economy, create new jobs and opportunities for millions of Americans, and ensure that the United States is the best place in the world for equipment manufacturers to innovate, manufacture, and do business.

*POLITICO* (login required) was first with the story on our call for a comprehensive national effort in support of equipment manufacturing and the manufacturing sector as a whole.

AEM President Dennis Slater said in today’s release: “The federal government should take strong and immediate action to support equipment manufacturers, protect the 2.8 million jobs that they support, and guarantee the viability of an industry that is essential to the economic and national security of our country, as well as our way of life. Between rising manufacturing costs and the industry’s growing skills gap, not to mention the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities across the country, it is imperative that our elected officials mobilize the full force of the federal government in support of the country’s manufacturing sector.”

AEM has been working with Michigan Senator Gary Peters on legislation that would accomplish the objectives of the proposed national strategy for manufacturing, and will continue to work with the Senator in the coming weeks to ensure the legislation utilizes current program funding and personnel to dramatically improve efficiencies and reduce redundancies in existing federal manufacturing programs, reduces onerous and ineffective regulations, and attracts broad bipartisan support.
AEM will be encouraging other trade associations and business groups to join them in working with the federal government to create a national strategy for manufacturing. The initial recommendations outlined by AEM today are meant to be starting point for a broader dialogue about how to ensure the country’s global leadership in manufacturing and guarantee the long-term economic and national security of the United States.

U.S. Dept. of Labor Releases Guidance for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)
New guidance was released by the U.S. Department of Labor today on how Under Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment compensation and are unable to continue working as a result of COVID-19 are eligible for benefits.

AEM Urges President Trump to End Russian, Saudi Crude Oil Manipulation
AEM and 15 other organizations representing workers and companies who build and provide equipment, materials, supplies, and services to energy infrastructure projects sent a letter to President Trump urging him to "take aggressive measures in both the diplomatic and legal arenas” against Russian and Saudi Arabian dumping of crude oil in global markets.

2020 Transportation Construction Coalition Fly-In Cancelled
The 2020 Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) Fly-In has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, AEM and the other TCC coalition partners continue to advocate for surface transportation reauthorization and other infrastructure investment policies in Congress this year. Please direct questions about the TCC Fly-In and coalition activities to AEM Director, Government Relations Kate Fox Wood at kfoxwood@aem.org.

State Activities
AEM has been monitoring activities taken by governors as they continue to issue closure orders and other guidance, and we are in close contact with their staff to make the case that our industry should be deemed “essential.”

Notable for today’s update is that the governors of Alaska, Alabama and Missouri issued a state-wide stay at home order, the governors of Louisiana, and Washington extended the duration of previous stay at home orders. The Governor of South Carolina extended the duration of a previous stay at home order and issued lodging restrictions, but exempted business travelers, and the Governor of Arkansas issued lodging restrictions, but exempted business travelers. The Governor of North Dakota issued travel restrictions for non-work-related visitors and the Governor of Pennsylvania issued additional guidance for essential businesses. The map below summarizes each state’s status. For all of the latest information, please visit our dedicated state by state tracker.
Canada Activities

AEM is supporting member companies in Canada as they are navigating the COVID-19 pandemic, including ongoing engagement with federal and provincial lawmakers to make sure that our industry is deemed “essential.”

Today, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that discussions with opposition parties are ongoing to determine the details of the legislation to implement the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, and that he expects Parliament to be recalled in the coming days to pass the agreed upon legislative package. Also today, included the opening of applications for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit through the Canada Revenue Agency, and the Prime Minister has committed to further broadening the program to support individuals who may not have met the initial criteria.

At the provincial level, Ontario has announced a more restrictive list of essential businesses, however manufacturing remains listed as essential. Quebec has announced that the closure of non-essential businesses across the province will be extended to May 4.

We continue to provide the latest resources and up-to-date information on AEM’s COVID-19 resources page. Please check it regularly for the latest on our activities in Canada.

We also encourage you to check out the latest updates from Ottawa and all the provinces.
Do you have questions or need to get a hold of AEM’s Advocacy Team? E-mail our Response Team at responseteam@aem.org with any questions or feedback.

As always, if you have any questions about AEM’s ongoing efforts, need assistance with a specific issue, or would like to share how the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic is impacting your business, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at keideberg@aem.org.

Best,
-Kip

Kip Eideberg  
Senior Vice President, Government & Industry Relations  
Association of Equipment Manufacturers