Today, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (R-N.Y.) signaled that the U.S. Senate could move as early as Thursday (April 9) to deliver more money to the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a program for businesses to cover payroll and expenses during the coronavirus pandemic. On that topic, this afternoon AEM hosted a webinar for member companies on how to navigate the PPP and other tax relief provisions included in the CARES Act. And in case you missed it, yesterday the AEM Advisor featured the first in a series of stories spotlighting how member companies are dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The first story profiled McElroy Manufacturing in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Please keep an eye out for future stories.

Here are some of the other recent developments:

**Congress Eyeing $350 billion in additional funds for Paycheck Protection Program**

The Paycheck Protection Program, part of the recently passed Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act, which provides partially forgivable loans to help businesses with fewer than 500 employees keep their workforce employed during the COVID-19 pandemic, may be getting as much as $350 billion more from Congress. The program has only been active for a few days but already banks have been overwhelmed by the enormous need for small business relief. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) has indicated that he would like for the U.S. Senate to pass the supplemental relief as early as this Thursday, but it still remains to be seen how fast the U.S. House will move.

**AEM Hosts Webinar on Paycheck Protection Program**

Today AEM hosted a webinar on the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and tax relief provisions in the CARES Act, featuring Doug Criscitello, Managing Director, Public Sector, Grant Thornton, LLP, and Omair Taher, Senior Association, Washington National Tax Office, Grant Thornton, LLP. Messrs. Criscitello and Taher walked through the eligibility and application requirements of these programs and answered questions from member companies. Here are a few of the questions asked:

**Does the use of PPP exclude one from using the payroll tax credit?**

The answer: Yes, you can use one or the other, but not both.

**Does the program include regional affiliates of national public companies?**

The answer: Yes, the Small Business Administration (SBA) requires an aggregation of interest. If a single company owns multiple small firms, the employees would need to be aggregated and under the threshold to be considered as a small business.
Messrs. Criscitello and Taher stressed that member companies should reach out to their local lenders with specific questions, including eligibility, about the Paycheck Protection Program. The webinar also featured a discussion about the current state of the state and federal policy responses, including an overview of what to expect in the forthcoming “phase four” COVID-19 stimulus package.

More details, including a summary of the Q&A and links to both presentations will be included in tomorrow’s AEM COVID-19 Advocacy Update.

**A New Normal: How One AEM Member Company is Dealing with COVID-19**

As part of an ongoing weekly series in the *AEM Advisor*, McElroy Manufacturing shared some of the ways the COVID-19 crisis has impacted its operations and some of the ways the company has learned to respond. From this week’s story, “Every company – whether large or small – is comprised of a diverse set of employees, all of whom possess different personalities, backgrounds and skillsets. McElroy is no different. So, when COVID-19 began to upend the company’s day-to-day activities and processes, company leaders were quick to recognize staff members would have a wide range of responses to the growing public health crisis.”

Please be on the lookout for other stories in future issues of the AEM Advisor.

**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 Governor of South Dakota issued a limited stay at home order for two counties, the Governors of Indiana, and New York extended the duration of previous stay at home orders. The Governor of Nebraska urged residents to stay at home if possible, North Dakota’s Agriculture Commission urged residents to postpone any non-essential events, and the Governor of New Hampshire issued lodging restrictions for travelers, but exempted business travelers. The Governor of Pennsylvania launched a Manufacturing Call to Action to support creating COVID-19 supplies for residents. 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 progress in the government’s efforts to work with Canadian manufacturers to produce medical equipment and supplies, including up to 30,000 ventilators. Negotiations continue with opposition parties concerning the details of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, which will necessitate the recalling of Parliament once a deal is reached.

And on the provincial level, the Government of Alberta has announced a range of temporary changes to provide greater flexibility to employees and employers as they respond to public health measures and the economic impacts of the pandemic.

We continue to update our resources on Canadian activities on AEM’s COVID-19 resources page. You can also click here for 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

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