May 1, 2020

AEM continues raise awareness about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on equipment manufacturer’s operations, supply chains, and the 2.8 million men and women of our industry, as well as the policy solutions needed to increase demand for equipment and put our member companies in a position to lead economic recovery.

Earlier this week, AEM released the findings of a survey of member company executives on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey has driven much of the media coverage of the current economic crisis, and this morning I joined Fox News to discuss the survey results and why the federal government must prioritize a significant investment in our nation’s infrastructure.

The Federal Reserve announced updates to the Main Street Lending Program, a federal loan program available to businesses who do not qualify for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) or other federal loans. We have compiled these into a presentation for you to review.

Equipment manufacturers continue to step up to aid their employees and communities, and support the response to this public health challenge. Today we highlight how Waukesha-based Husco joined a consortium of local companies to produce a face mask that can be sanitized and reused.

Do not forget to share these stories with us so we can continue to highlight how equipment manufacturers are making a difference!

As federal and state governments turn their attention to reopening, we have compiled the latest information and resources on reopening plans into a presentation. Please feel free to share this one with suppliers, customers, and other partners.

Here are recaps of these and other developments:

**AEM Hits the (Virtual) TV Studios to Discuss CEO Survey Findings**

Earlier today I joined Sandra Smith on Fox News’ America’s Newsroom to discuss the findings of our survey and to highlight the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on equipment manufacturers. As the survey made clear, right now the two biggest challenges for our industry are plummeting demand and stressed supply chains.
As I told Sandra, the equipment manufacturers are by and large open and on the job. But for them to stay open, and for their suppliers to stay open, we need to significantly increase demand for equipment. And to create that demand, we need Congress to prioritize a significant investment in our nation’s infrastructure.

We will continue to communicate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our industry and the need for Congress to put policy ahead of politics and put forward policy solutions in the days and weeks ahead (much like we did on FarmJournal.com and RFD-TV earlier this week).

Main Street Lending Program Details Announced
Yesterday, the Federal Reserve announced updates to the Main Street Lending Program, an additional credit facility program created by the CARES Act to provide several different types of loans for businesses impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, but don’t qualify for the Paycheck Protection Program, or other federal loan programs. AEM has updated the slide deck previously provided about this program for member companies interested in applying for a loan through this program. A start date for the program has not yet been announced.

A key modification to the original program increases the annual revenue and employment totals for Main Street Lending applicants. Originally, companies with up to an annual revenue of $2.5 billion and 10,000 employees were eligible. Yesterday’s updated guidance raises company eligibility to $5 billion or less in annual revenue and with 15,000 or less employees. In addition, loans of up to $200 million can now be issued.

AEM Member Husco Joins Consortium to Produce Innovative PPE
Waukesha-based Husco is helping to lead the community’s response to COVID-19 through its work in the MaskForce consortium. The consortium, which initially started as a gathering of more than 50 local manufacturers, first responders, educational institutions, and healthcare
organizations, has produced an innovative face mask that is unlike the temporary ones many are using. This mask, made out of medical grade silicone and polypropylene, can be sanitized and re-used. The first shipment of 30,000 masks was sent to Milwaukee-area first responders this week, and plans are underway to produce 10,000 a day to keep up with demand.

**DOL Hosting Online Dialogue on “Opening America’s Workplaces Again”**
The Department of Labor is looking to solicit ideas from the public on how best to help employers and workers reopen America’s workplaces safely. The dialogue will run until May 7, 2020. Ideas and feedback collected during the dialogue will be used by the department as it continues to develop compliance assistance materials and guidance for workers and employers, and will be shared with policy-makers at the federal, state and local level. Registration is required to participate. Register [here](#).

**DOL, Treasury, and IRS Release Employee Benefit Guidance**
The Department of Labor, Department of the Treasury, and Internal Revenue Service issued a joint notice extending certain time frames affecting participants’ rights to healthcare coverage, portability and continuation of group health plan coverage under COBRA, and extends the time for plan participants to file or perfect benefit claims or appeals of denied claims. These extensions provide participants and beneficiaries of employee benefit plans additional time to make important health coverage and other decisions affecting their benefits during the coronavirus outbreak.

DOL has extended the time for plan officials to furnish benefit statements, annual funding notices, and other notices and disclosures so long as they make a good faith effort to furnish the documents as soon as administratively practicable. [Read more](#).

DOL also issued a set of [Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)](#) on health benefit and retirement benefit issues to help employee benefit plan participants and beneficiaries, plan sponsors and employers.

**Roadmap to Reopening**
President Trump and Governors have begun to turn their focus towards economic recovery and reopening initiatives. Governors are charting their own economic recovery plan, following a few roadmaps from experts. The reopening plans outline the necessary requirements before a stay at home order can be lifted, focusing on a decreasing rate of infection, decreasing hospitalization rates, and increased testing capacity. AEM [has compiled the expiration of the current stay at orders and the regional task forces](#) Governors are using to coordinate their reopening plans.

**State Activities**
AEM has been monitoring activities taken by Governors as they continue to issue closure and reopening orders. We are in close contact with their staff to make the case that our industry is establishing health and safety protocols to protect both employees and customers.
Notable for today’s update is that the Governors of Minnesota and Nevada have extended the duration of the previous stay at home orders. The Governors of Connecticut and Washington announced the indicators needed before reopening the state. The Governors of Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, and Ohio announced the resumption of limited operations for certain businesses.

Now that state governments are transitioning into re-opening strategies, we are providing a new U.S. map showing when state shelter-in-place orders and stay-at-home advisories expire.

For all of the latest information, please visit our dedicated state by state tracker.

Canada Activities
Today, the Senate is reconvening to adopt Bill C-15, An Act respecting Canada Emergency student benefits (coronavirus disease 2019). The bill will provide for the creation of the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB).

Today’s updates from Canadian provinces include:

- **Alberta**: The province announced a plan to gradually reopen closed businesses and services and get people back to work.
• **British Columbia**: The province announced that it is deferring Stumpage fees it charges to help people, communities, and forest companies navigate through the COVID-19 crisis.

• **Ontario**: The province announced that it is allowing certain businesses and workplaces to reopen, as long as they comply with strict public health measures and operate safely during the COVID-19 outbreak.

• **Saskatchewan**: The province announced that anyone working now or returning to work under Phase I and Phase II of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan will have access to licensed child care services located within Saskatchewan schools.

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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