May 4, 2020

After several weeks in recess, Senators returned to Washington and the Senate gavelled in. While the House had originally announced that it would return this week, conversations with the Capitol physician postponed those plans until May 11, at the earliest. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) has indicated that in the short-term, the Senate will focus on moving forward with confirming judicial and executive branch nominees.

Is your company negatively impacted by supply chain disruptions in Mexico? Then we need to hear from you! AEM is collecting testimonials from member companies and sharing them with senior government officials to highlight both the ongoing damage to our industry and to Mexico’s economy. As the Mexican government decides which manufacturing facilities to reopen, it is crucial that they have this information. To provide a testimonial, or for further guidance, please contact AEM’s Alex Russ.

As both federal and state governments turn their attention to reopening economies, we have compiled the latest information and resources on reopening plans into a presentation for your review.

Here are some of the day’s other developments:

**Congressional Update**
Late last week, Democrats on the House Education and Labor Committee and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions released H.R. 6646, Relaunching America’s Workforce Act. While partisan, this legislation includes some strong provisions to assist displaced workers during the COVID-19 pandemic recovery. In general, the legislation authorizes funds for programs that help to provide displaced individuals with skills and training, support those individuals with wrap around services such as childcare that can be barriers to employment, and promote layoff aversion. In total, H.R. 6646 authorizes $15 billion for the following programs:

- $500 million for National Dislocated Worker Grants
- $2.5 billion for State Dislocated Worker Grants
- $2.5 billion for Youth Workforce Investment Activities
- $2.5 billion for Adult Education and Training Activities
- $1 billion for Wagner- Peyser/Employment Services
- $500 million for JobCorps
- $150 million for Native American Programs
- $150 million for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
- $250 million for YouthBuild
- $350 million for Reentry Employment Opportunities
- $500 million for Registered Apprenticeships
- $1 billion for Adult Education and Literacy
- $2 billion for Community College and Industry Partnership Grants (TAACCCT grants)
- $90 million for Department of Labor Administration
- $1 billion for Career and Technical Education
- $10 million for Department of Education Administration

Although the funds authorized in this bill cannot be used for Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Programs or related Standards Recognizing Entities, there are a number of helpful provisions included that are highlighted below, though you can find a full section by section of the bill here:

**Title I: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act**
- Expands the definition for adult dislocated workers and youth to include the self-employed as well as those in the gig economy.
- Allows for governors to account for pandemic when determining whether to allow employer reimbursement of up to 75% of wages for employees participating in on-the-job training.
- Establishes a grant program for states to provide layoff aversion, short term retraining, support for dislocated workers, and supportive services like childcare and housing.
- Expands eligibility for certain youth programs for individuals that turn 25 during the pandemic.
- Reinstates Great Recession grant program for community college and industry partnerships to ensure programs provide stackable, portable credentials and allows funds to be used for training equipment as well.

**Title II: Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006**
- Allows recipients with remaining funds at the end of the 2019-2020 school year to retain those funds rather than returning to the state for redistribution.
- Waives certain professional development requirements during the COVID-19 national emergency.
- Authorizes funds to expand and modernize CTE program infrastructure to allow for virtual education among other allowances.

AEM will continue to follow H.R. 6646, Relaunching America’s Workforce Act, as further information is released and will work to ensure that the workforce needs of equipment manufacturers are considered as this bill or any similar bill moves forward.

**AEM Presses White House to Include Infrastructure Investment in COVID-19 Recovery**
In partnership with other industry groups, [AEM spearheaded a letter that was sent to the White House last Friday](#). The letter emphasized the significant benefit that investment in U.S. roads,
highways, and bridges could bring to the country as it recovers from the coronavirus pandemic. AEM members will continue to make the case to prioritize infrastructure investment in future COVID-19 recovery legislation to both President Trump and lawmakers on Capitol Hill.


Next in our series profiling AEM member companies is a spotlight on Titan International. The Des Moines-based mounted tires and wheel systems manufacturer saw the writing on the wall when its Chinese operations did not resume after the Lunar New Year holiday. Read their profile to learn how their operations in China, Italy, and Spain helped guide their response to COVID-19 in its U.S. facilities.

**ICYMI: AEM CEO Survey in The Wall Street Journal**

This weekend, *The Wall Street Journal* published a story, *Construction Work Resumes, But Demand Weakens*, that cites the findings from AEM’s CEO survey. The story also highlights the lower demand for construction equipment, noting “90% of respondents to a recent survey by the Association of Equipment Manufacturers reported a drop in new orders” and discusses how equipment orders were cut after states deemed some projects nonessential.

**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 Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Wyoming 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
On May 3, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that families receiving the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) will get $300 extra per child in May to help them deal with the added pressures of COVID-19.

Today's updates from Canadian provinces include:
- **British Columbia**: Today, British Columbia announced the extension of the temporary layoff period to 16 weeks for COVID-19 related reasons. This change to the Employment Standards Act aligns B.C.’s temporary layoff provisions with the federal Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) period.

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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