June 5, 2020

As you head into the weekend, please remember to fill out the CEO Survey that we deployed last week. Our deadline is COB today. Your feedback is critical to the way we shape our advocacy efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the long-term recovery of the industry, both on Capitol Hill and at 1600 Pennsylvania. [Click here to complete the survey.]

Yesterday, President Trump signed an Executive Order (EO) that will expedite environmental reviews and permitting for infrastructure projects across the country. With the signing of this EO, we are hopeful that it will be one piece of the puzzle that will kickstart the economy and get Americans back to work.

After we reported in Wednesday’s update that a number of Senate Republicans had raised concerns with H.R. 7010 (the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act of 2020), the bill was passed shortly after by unanimous consent at the urging of Republican leadership. The bill, which makes a number of fixes to the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), is now headed to the President’s desk.

Here are some of today’s other developments:

**Complete the CEO Survey TODAY!**

We deployed the second round of our CEO survey last week to help us better understand how the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact member companies, identify the challenges facing executives, and understand the outlook for the next three to six months. The deadline to complete it is COB today. We plan to share the results by late next week and will provide an update on how we’re able to leverage them. **If you have not completed the survey, we ask that you do so by TODAY at 5 p.m. Click here to complete the survey.**

Please don’t hesitate to email me if you have any questions.

**Executive Order Signed to Accelerate Infrastructure Projects**

Yesterday, President Trump signed the Executive Order on “Accelerating the Nation’s Economic Recovery from the COVID-19 Emergency by Expediting Infrastructure Investments and Other Activities.” The Executive Order responds to growing economic pain caused by the coronavirus pandemic by expediting environmental reviews and permitting for highway and infrastructure, Army Corps of Engineers, and federal land projects in order to start infrastructure projects and
put people back on the job sooner. Most notably, the EO directs agency heads to identify “planned or potential actions to facilitate the nation’s recovery” that may allow for expedition of or exclusion from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and the Clean Water Act (CWA).

**Paycheck Protection Program Fix Bill Sent to President’s Desk**

Late Wednesday, the Senate passed H.R. 7010, Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act of 2020 by unanimous consent. The legislation provides a number of changes to the Paycheck Protection Program that AEM has been pushing for, including extending the timeline for businesses to spend the loans to 24 weeks from eight. The bill also lowers the minimum amount that must be spent on payroll from 75 percent to 60 percent. The House passed H.R. 7010 last week by a margin of 417-1 but Senate passage of the legislation was delayed by a small group of Republican senators who later dropped their objections at the urging of Senate leadership. The legislation now heads to the President who is expected to sign the bill into law.

**ICYMI: AEM Calls for Bipartisan Effort in Passing Surface Transportation Bill**

Late Wednesday, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Democrats released the text of the Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America (INVEST in America) Act. In a statement released yesterday, AEM’s Dennis Slater said that he is encouraged by the momentum, but urged lawmakers to work towards bipartisan legislation. Slater said, “Republicans and Democrats must agree on legislation that prioritizes American jobs and provides long-term funding for critical infrastructure modernization. Infrastructure investment is the bipartisan solution that will help us out of this sluggish economic pace, rebuilding our economy and our aging roads, bridges, and highways.” [Read the full statement](#).

**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 Florida, Maryland, Michigan, Oregon, New York, and Texas announced the resumption of limited operations for certain businesses in the coming days.

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.
Canada Activities
On June 5, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated that the federal government is negotiating with the provinces and territories concerning their offer of $14 billion for measures to keep COVID-19 at bay as the economy restarts. Provinces such as Ontario have stated that the support offered is too low, with that province suggesting it alone requires over $20 billion in federal support.

Statistics Canada released the labor force survey for May, which showed the economy added 289,600 jobs in May. Despite this increase the unemployment rate rose to 13.7 per cent, the highest level in more than four decades of comparable data.

Today’s highlights from the provinces include:

- **British Columbia**: The province announced that B.C. businesses eligible for rent support from the federal government will be protected from evictions as the B.C. government issues a new order under the Emergency Program Act (EPA).
- **Manitoba**: The province announced it is making an increased investment of $5.7 million in the Canada-Manitoba Job Grant program this year to better assist businesses with staff training costs as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Nova Scotia**: The province announced, in partnership with the federal government, assistance for farmers which includes a new COVID-19 Response and Mitigation Program, funded under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. The program will help food producers with the costs of meeting extra health requirements, help producers get
their crops to market, fund projects aimed at maintaining competitiveness, productivity, profitability, and support abattoir efficiency and development.

- **Ontario**: The province highlighted that it continues [investing in more local manufacturers](#) in order to keep frontline workers and communities safe during the COVID-19 outbreak.

- **Saskatchewan**: The province announced [amendments to The Mineral Tenure Registry Regulations that grant relief to the mining sector](#) in response to impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. These amendments will provide mining exploration companies more time to raise necessary capital and access mine sites to carry out exploration activities, work programs and engage with local and First Nations communities.

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](mailto: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](mailto:keideberg@aem.org).

Best,

-Kip

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