



April 20, 2020

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
United States House of Representatives

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
United States Senate

Leader Kevin McCarthy
United States House of Representatives

Minority Leader Charles Schumer
United States Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders McCarthy, McConnell and Schumer:

As the voice of all things work, workers, and the workplace, the health, safety and financial stability of workplaces are the highest priorities for the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and our 300,000+ members. During this public health crisis our members are leading their organizational response to COVID-19 and will continue to shepherd employers and employees through the post-pandemic recovery.

Therefore, as Congress develops additional COVID-19 relief legislation, SHRM urges policymakers to consider the following issues which are important to our members:

- **Small Businesses** – The Paycheck Protection Program is vital to help small employers cover payroll costs, mortgage and rent payments and health-care benefits for employees. Congress should authorize additional funding for this critical program to assist more employers and employees. Additionally, SHRM encourages Congress to support the inclusion of all nonprofit organizations in any emergency relief legislation. Nonprofit organizations, like SHRM Chapters and State Councils, provide important services to their communities. Absent congressional action, small businesses and nonprofits will be forced to discontinue their services and reduce or eliminate employment.
- **Health Care Benefits** – Employers are working diligently to ensure employees retain access to affordable health insurance benefits. The COVID-19 crisis has severely delayed mail delivery impacting 226-J Internal Revenue Service letters. Congress should grant employers an additional 60-90 days following the date of the end of the national, state, and local emergencies to respond to 226-J notifications.
- **Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs)** – Congress should ensure maximum flexibility for FSAs as health care providers are limiting access to routine treatments and childcare services have been suspended, leaving FSA funds unused. Therefore, a temporary extension of the grace period for eligible expenses and an increase in the FSA roll-over amount are warranted.
- **Paid Leave** – Employers who may have already offered generous paid leave to their employees are now working to implement the temporary paid leave requirements under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, with costs being reimbursed through tax credits. Employers of all sizes continue to experience decreased revenue streams as a result of COVID-19. Given the financial constraints during this crisis, SHRM urges policymakers to avoid imposing additional

paid leave requirements that may inadvertently force employers to reduce employment at a time when financial stability is needed most.

- **Job Share Programs** – Employers in thirty states are currently offering job-sharing programs to maintain employees on their payroll while providing access to healthcare benefits. Congress should seek to implement a federal framework replicating successful state job-sharing programs to ensure employees have financial stability and access to healthcare during this crisis.
- **Unemployment Insurance (UI)** – Individuals unemployed as a result of COVID-19 should not have to worry about access to unemployment insurance benefits during these uncertain times. As unemployment continues to rise, SHRM believes Congress should build on the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act by authorizing stimulus support to states to offset increased expenses of unemployment benefits. Absent allocations to the states, employers and employees will face higher than usual unemployment taxes that will hinder COVID-19 recovery efforts.

SHRM looks forward to working with you and members of Congress to address the challenges employers and employees are facing as they navigate COVID-19. We greatly appreciate your leadership and support on these issues.

Sincerely,



Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., SHRM-SCP
President & CEO



Emily M. Dickens
*Corporate Secretary and Chief of Staff
Head, Government Affairs*

CC: All Members of Congress