



March 25, 2020

Dear Governor Lamont,

On behalf of the 65,000 SEIU members in Connecticut, we want to commend you for your leadership in responding to the current crisis, and we appreciate your efforts to help our members and putting workers first. We realize how much pressure you and your administration must be experiencing.

Our members are also under tremendous pressure. Whether they are healthcare workers, public employees, or frontline service workers- whether they are in the public or private sector,-they all worry every day. The pandemic has ripped the veneer of affluence off our state and revealed an inconvenient truth- that too many of us are too vulnerable. Individual financial and health problems happen all the time and usually gain little attention. The current COVID-19 outbreak makes these problems happen all at once. To all of us.

Everyone needs equal access to prevention, testing, treatment and economic support regardless of how old they are, the color of their skin, where they were born, or how much money they make.

As you move forward, your decisions should be guided by these 3 principles:

1. Getting front-line workers the Personal Protective Equipment and paid sick leave they desperately need
2. Bailout people, not corporations! No blank checks for big corporations unless they agree to keep paying their workers.
3. Protect ALL workers—put working people first, no matter where we are from or what color we are.

We urge you to enact the attached policy recommendations detailed below that support and protect workers who are already on the front lines of preventing further spread of this pandemic. We also support the attached recommendations and requests from individual locals and our brothers and sisters in other unions.

We would further urge you to use your platform as a leader in what is shaping up to be a continued and tough fight to:

1. call on the banks and credit card industries to initiate an at-least 45 day moratorium on monthly payments and suspend all penalties and fees

2. to call on the Federal Government to immediately order private industry to commence producing Personal Protection Equipment.

In the great recession of 2008-9, a great deal of relief went to major corporations and banks (many of whom caused the fiscal disaster) but not enough to working families. We urge you and our federal congressional delegation to work with us so we do not repeat that mistake.

These requests may be outside your ordinary comfort zone but recall the words of a former Surgeon General: "Everything we do before a pandemic will seem alarmist. Everything we do after a pandemic will seem inadequate". We realize that we ask much of you. But these times are asking much from all of us and demand bold action.

Thank you for your consideration. For questions or further discussion please feel contact us.

Sincerely,

Rob Baril Juan Hernandez Steve Anderson

1199NE 32 BJ CSEA 2001

Carl Chisem Maureen Chalmers

CEUI 4Cs

Cc:

Congressman John Larson
Congressman Joe Courtney
Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro
Congressman Jim Himes
Congresswoman Jahana Hayes
Martin Looney, Senate President Pro Tempore (Looney@senatedems.ct.gov)
Bob Duff, Senate Majority Leader (Duff@senatedems.ct.gov)
Len Fasano, Senate Minority Leader (Len.Fasano@cga.ct.gov)
Joe Aresimowicz, Speaker of the House (Joe.Aresimowicz@cga.ct.gov)
Matthew Ritter, House Majority Leader (Matthew.Ritter@cga.ct.gov)
Themis Klarides, House Minority Leader (Themis.Klarides@cga.ct.gov)
Josh Geballe, COO (Josh.Geballe@ct.gov)
Paul Mounds, Chief of Staff (Paul.Mounds@ct.gov)

CT SEIU STATE COUNCIL PANDEMIC RESPONSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency Paid Sick Leave for All Connecticut

- Immediately require employers to provide employees with 15 days of emergency sick leave when there is a public health outbreak or emergency for everyone working in Connecticut. The Bill recently passed by the US House excludes employers with more than 500 employees and only provides 66% wage replacement, when used to care for family members. **Connecticut** should fill in the gaps. A paid sick leave policy should include;
 - Requirements applicable to all employers, including those with 500 or more employees.
 - Immediate access to paid sick days, without waiting or accrual periods.
 - Allow employees who are placed under quarantine – even if they are not sick – to use sick days.
 - Allow people to use paid sick days if they are staying home to care for someone who is sick or in quarantine.
 - Allow people to use paid sick days for business or school closures due to public health outbreak or emergency even if the employee is not sick.

Unemployment Insurance for Reduced Hours or Business Closures

- Provide unemployment benefits for all workers who are impacted by illness, caring for a loved one, reduced hours or business closure.
- Suspend waiting week and work search requirements.
- Enact a workshare program within the state's unemployment insurance program
- Clarify that workers have good cause to quit--and therefore be eligible for unemployment insurance--if their employer forces them to engage in activity that would jeopardize their health and safety, or the health and safety of their loved ones.

Eviction and utility shutdown freezes

- Enact emergency 3 month moratoriums on evictions, foreclosures and utility shut-offs.
- Enact measures to allow impacted workers access to no interest loans to pay their past due rents or mortgages and utility bills.

Immigrant Rights

- Ensure all emergency efforts are communicated in multiple languages, and conduct outreach and prepare educational materials that are tailored to community needs.
- Defend local sanctuary status and refuse to allow ICE and Border Patrol officers into hospitals and public buildings.
- Call on the federal government to suspend ICE raids so that vulnerable patients won't be deterred from seeking help.