

TO: NAW Direct Members

FROM: NAW Government Relations Team

DATE: March 24, 2020

We will issue these summary reports once per day or more frequently as events warrant to keep you as current as we can on developments of most import to the distribution industry and our efforts on your behalf. We encourage you to retain them in an electronic file for easy reference as we may refer to previous issues in these reports.

1. Senate's Ongoing Negotiations for Second COVID-19 Emergency Stimulus Bill

First and most important: Thank you VERY much for all the calls you placed to members of the Senate to urge them to complete action on the rescue bill, specifically to Democratic Senators who voted twice against allowing that legislation to even be considered in the Senate. Progress has definitely been made and those calls certainly helped.

After a very difficult day yesterday filled with rancor rarely seen on the floor of the US Senate, negotiations continued well into the night to try to hammer out a compromise rescue bill. As of this morning those negotiations continued, but leaders on both sides of the Capitol and both sides of the political aisle all agree that the number of outstanding issues is small and that there is a real possibility that a final bill can be agreed to and pass the Senate today or tonight. While that is far from certain, it is notable that none of the intense partisan bickering and name-calling that dominated the "debate" yesterday is heard today, from either side.

Significantly, after effectively blowing up the negotiations in the Senate that were close to producing a bi-partisan agreement last Saturday, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has been much more accommodating today, and suggested in an early morning phone interview on CNBC that, absent any "poison pill" provisions added to the bill by Senate Republicans, the House could find a way to act on the bill so it could be sent to President for his signature.

It is rather remarkable that the Speaker warned the Senate Republicans against "poison pill" amendments when in fact none had been discussed. Even more notable, it was the Speaker herself who offered a piece of legislation filled with unrelated provisions

including Green New Deal environmental issues, election reform proposals adamantly opposed by Senate Republicans, U.S. Post Office bailout, mandatory diversity on corporate boards, union-strengthening provisions, and a host of other issues important to the strong left-wing activists in her Party but completely unrelated to the current crisis.

Among the major sticking points in the negotiations was the creation and handling of the \$500 billion fund to provide loans to companies. In the original bill, the Secretary of the Treasury was given broad authority to determine which companies would receive loans and the details of those loans would not be disclosed for six months. The Secretary was also given the authority to waive the bill's ban on corporate stock buy-backs, a real sticking point with many. Those provisions provided ammunition to Democrats calling that loan program a "corporate slush fund." As of this writing, negotiations are reported to have produced "guard rails" around that loan program to provide transparency and broaden the implementation of the program outside the Treasury Secretary.

We hope to be able to send you an update later today reporting that an agreement has been reached.

2. Paid Sick Leave Provisions for Employers

As previously reported, on March 18th the Senate passed the "Families First Coronavirus Response Act" which has been signed into law by President Trump.

Within that legislation was a provision which applied to employers with fewer than 500 employees. It provided 80 hours of emergency paid sick leave to full-time employees, and a prorated amount to part-time employees. The provision also included 10 weeks of paid emergency family and medical leave, as well as a refundable payroll tax credit to employers impacted by this legislation.

NAW plays a major role in a robust employee benefits coalition of major trade associations. One member of the coalition created a checklist to help employers navigate this complex legislation.

[Click here](#) to view this checklist.

3. U.S. Department of Labor to Host Online Dialogue for Employers and Employees

The U.S. Department of Labor will be hosting a national online dialogue to provide employers and employees with an innovative opportunity to offer their perspective as the Department develops compliance assistance materials and outreach strategies related to the implementation of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).

The ideas and comments gathered from this dialogue will inform compliance assistance guidance, resources, and tools, as well as outreach approaches, that assist employers and employees in understanding their responsibilities and rights under the FFCRA.

Anybody who is interested can participate online at <https://ffcra.ideascale.com> from March 23 through March 29, 2020, or can join a Twitter chat hosted by [@ePolicyWorks](#) on March 25, 2020 at 2 p.m. using the hashtag #EPWChat.

Many thanks—

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National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors