

Dear Rep. Shelly B. Davis,

As you confront the challenges surrounding the spread of Coronavirus I request that you consider the essential services that HVACR professionals play in maintaining the health of our nation and protecting vulnerable populations against the spread of this disease. Specifically, I ask that you exempt HVACR contractors from mandates that would force contractors to close their businesses or that would require our staff to self isolate.

HVAC contractors are a backbone of the economy, responsible for ensuring modern medicine is possible, ensuring information technology centers are operational, maintaining a fresh supply of food, and providing essential comfort for nearly every hospital, office building, and home in the country. HVACR contractors provide more than comfort, they provide essential services that our economy depends upon and ACCA is the premier trade association representing this pillar of the economy.

HVACR contractors should be considered emergency service providers because they perform necessary, life-saving services on several components of our nation's most critical infrastructure. This includes, but is not limited to, the healthcare industry, the agri-food supply chain, cooling for data and information technology centers, and essential heating, cooling, and refrigeration needs for vulnerable populations.

If our contractors do not have the necessary labor to service the HVACR systems at vital sites like hospitals, labs, pharmacies, grocery stores, and food warehouses, among other places where lives, safety, and economic well-being are all at stake, the consequences could be catastrophic. Imagine a hospital, overwhelmed with patients suffering from the Coronavirus, and the mechanical systems breakdown. Failure to provide ventilation needs and maintain indoor air quality would mean certain death for many.

We also request that you consider measures to support this essential component of the economy as we navigate the rapidly changing circumstances around us. Rather than mandating paid leave for workers, we request that you consider expanding access to unemployment insurance. Mandates to provide paid leave at this time presume that HVACR contractors have enough liquidity or cash reserves to persevere the economic hardships they could be facing. This year many HVACR contractors are already operating on lines of credit because the mild winter we experienced saw fewer breakdowns of heating equipment, and therefore required less repair or replacement work. Tax credits will not produce sufficient liquidity in time and we fear the government does not have the infrastructure and businesses do not have the administrative resources to access these advances in the time needed to deter business closures.

Rather than mandating paid leave, which could force many small and medium businesses to close, ACCA supports immediate action from the federal government that would encourage

states to loosen restrictions on the ability to use unemployment. ACCA also supports state action that would immediately expand unemployment insurance and loosen restrictions on the use of these benefits. The federal government could also provide additional funding to states that may experience shortfalls in their unemployment accounts.

Unlike mandated paid leave, which contractors have not budgeted for, HVACR contractors have budgeted for unemployment insurance and have already paid into those accounts. Considering that unemployment has been at an historic low, those accounts should be well funded, and we believe that would enable HVACR contractors survive some very challenging times.

Thank you for your efforts to address my concerns. And, thank you for working in a bipartisan fashion to help our country navigate these exceptional times.

Sincerely,

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This message was sent by KnowWho, as a service provider, on behalf of an individual associated with BIPAC. Please contact Kelsey Moncrief at moncrief@bipac.org or (202) 776-7467 for more information.