

Dear Co-Chairs Holvey,

As a business owner, I am writing today to share the impacts the current COVID-19 health crisis is having on my business and my employees.

Personally, we are lucky, perhaps, in that we live on a farm with a well stocked root cellar.

So, it is my employees for which I am concerned. They are part-time at our retail spice/tea business. We are allowed to be open, but nobody is coming out to purchase anything despite restaurants being closed. As such, I am forced to decide between furloughing my employees or paying them to come in and do essentially nothing all day.

I suggest an automatic acceptance into the Workshare program no matter the size of the business to help us stay open. Previously, we were not allowed to join the program if we didn't meet their requirements, such as having less than three employees.

If we close, then I suggest automatic acceptance of unemployment benefits during the outbreak.

Such help would allow us to reopen immediately when the threat has passed.

Sincerely,

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