March 13, 2020

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), we are writing in support of HR 6201, The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which is scheduled for full consideration in the House today. As a union representing upwards of 90,000 workers, including tens of thousands of workers in states that have been hit hardest by the coronavirus, we urge for swift passage of this much needed legislation.

As we can see from actions taken in just the last twenty-four hours, private and public sector employers, schools, and even professional sports leagues are shutting their doors to protect workers and the public from the virus. While necessary, these measures will lead to workers across sectors and professions being prevented to work for extended periods of time, leaving many with the reality of missing paychecks. This will not only lead to hardship for millions of working families, it will also obviously render a significant blow to our economy.

Earlier this week, IFPTE endorsed legislation authored by Congresswoman DeLauro and Senator Murray that requiring employers permit to workers to compile up to seven days of paid sick leave, while also providing for another 14 days of immediate paid sick leave upon an occurrence of a public health crisis, including the coronavirus. IFPTE is pleased that HR 6201 builds upon the DeLauro/Murray bill by providing comprehensive legislative relief for working families impacted by the fallout related to this national health crisis. Specifically, this legislation includes:

- Fourteen days of paid sick leave, and as much as three months of paid family and medical leave;
- Free coronavirus testing for anyone who needs it, including the uninsured;
- Expanded unemployment insurance to help workers make ends meet while out of work;
- Expanded food security programs for students, the elderly and needy families;
- Enhanced worker protections for healthcare and other workers on the frontlines of the coronavirus response;
- Increased federal resources toward Medicaid to assist States with coronavirus related budget pressures.

We applaud the Congress for moving quickly to pass a bill last week that provided $8.3 billion in funding to help our nation battle through this emergency. We are equally pleased that the House took the critical next step in moving that legislation that will assist working families during this health emergency. We urge all House members to vote for this bill, for the Senate to follow suit, and the President to sign it.

Sincerely,

Paul Shearon
President

Matthew Biggs
Secretary-Treasurer