



Office of the Mayor-President

City of Baton Rouge
Parish of East Baton Rouge

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SHARON WESTON BROOME
Mayor-President

April 1, 2020

The Honorable John Kennedy
United States Senator
416 Russell Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dr. Bill Cassidy
United States Senator
520 Hart SOB
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Garret Graves
United States Congressman
Louisiana 6th Congressional District
2402 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cedric Richmond
United States Congressman
Louisiana 5th Congressional District
506 Cannon HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressional Delegation Members:

Our community is grateful for the various federal financial assistance mechanisms incorporated into the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed by Congress and signed by President Trump in March. As local governments continue serving during this pandemic in the distinct position of protecting the health and safety of our citizens and workforce, while ensuring the continued delivery of basic services that are necessary in our communities, I write to communicate with all of you my strong support for expedited federal legislation providing hazard pay for our healthcare workers, first responders and essential employees.

Over the past few weeks, these critical, front-line personnel have served not only to ensure that our citizens continue receiving critical services, but also to provide a tremendous sense of calm and reassurance to our community during this time of crisis. Can you imagine the heightened sense of anxiety amongst our citizens if the delivery of such services as medical response treatment, sanitation services, fire and police protection, or traffic control were discontinued?

Additionally, while I have stated that local government budgets were not designed to handle a long-term pandemic battle, my consistent position has been that I will not sacrifice the integrity or safety of our workforce, and that I will overturn every stone to ensure their appropriate reward and care. For example, in order to ensure the protection of our parish's

essential employees, in the past two weeks we have aggressively procured thousands of units of PPE, including masks, gloves, Tyvek suits and hand sanitizer, as well as aligned our overtime policies for our essential employees with FEMA regulations, in order to ensure overtime pay for these personnel is eligible for reimbursement.

Federal assistance to provide for hazard pay for these essential personnel is imperative. From every scenario I have seen, while the immediate Coronavirus mitigation actions being enforced in our communities are intended to be short-term, the length of fully eradicating this pandemic stretches on for months. To put an additional financial burden on local governments to adequately reward these personnel risks the long-term solvency of a local government's budget. We must as a nation demonstrate through words, deeds and actions, our unmitigated support for our healthcare workers, first responders and essential employees, for the role they play during this time in our nation's history.

As Congress begins discussions of a fourth stimulus bill, I urge you to make hazard pay for essential personnel an imperative part of the discussions of this legislation. I trust you will give my concerns every appropriate consideration, and I thank you again for your commitment to the State of Louisiana and the United States of America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sharon Weston Broome", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Sharon Weston Broome
Mayor-President