

NACS Federal Update on COVID-19 Efforts

As local, state and federal governments move to close non-essential businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, NACS is working with state associations, advocating for convenience stores and gas stations to be designated as essential businesses. NACS compiled a list of key strategic messages highlighting the critical role convenience stores and gas stations play in giving Americans access to fuel, food and other necessary items (previously sent).

NACS is working with our state association partners to reach out to their Governors, state and local officials and urge them to designate convenience stores as essential. Today's conference call with our state association partners was the first step in this process and also allowed us the opportunity to articulate our response to COVID-19.

Other Key Issues

- **EMV Delay** – NACS has heard from retailers and state associations that there are supply chain disruptions impacting the EMV migration. NACS is working with our partner, the Merchants Advisory Group, to send a letter to the networks seeking an EMV AFD deadline delay given disruption due to COVID-19.
- **SNAP** – NACS has reached out to the Food & Nutrition Service to see how convenience stores can help SNAP families during this time of crisis. FNS shared that the agency does not have the authority to issue hot food waivers because this is a national emergency. They only have the authority to issue those waivers during natural disasters in areas where beneficiaries are without access to power or displaced from homes, and thus, unable to prepare foods at home. We are reaching out to Congress to legislatively give FNS this authority for this federal emergency.
- **Fuels** – NACS is working closely with PMAA, NATSO, and SIGMA on several issues relating to supply, transportation and delivery of fuel. Specifically:
 - **Trucker Hours of Service Waiver** – NACS completed work on a joint industry letter with other associations advocating for a federal, nationwide waiver of hours of service restrictions on drivers of trucks transporting fuel to help deal with labor shortages and other dislocation. A waiver was already granted for deliveries of medical supplies, cleaning supplies and food for emergency restocking.
 - **Summer RVP Delay** – NACS has heard from several members and state associations regarding concerns with the transition from winter to summer gasoline blends. NACS reached out to EPA. The groups may jointly advocate for a delay in those requirements.

Federal Legislation

The House has passed its second legislative package in response to covid-19. This legislation applies new FMLA and requires paid sick time requirements (up to 2 weeks) on all companies with 500 or fewer employees. Covered employers will be able to recoup 100% of payments made under this legislation in the form of federal refundable tax credits available quarterly. Companies with 500 or more employees are not required to offer paid leave, but if they do they will not be eligible for the tax credit.

This may change. The Senate is expected to take it up soon, possibly today. Some changes are possible, but the extent is as-of-yet unknown. Once the Senate has finalized the legislation we will be working with our counsels at Steptoe & Johnson and Fisher Phillips to produce summary and/or compliance documents for our members.

The Senate is also preparing a 3rd package of economic stimulus and support for the business community that they hope to be working on by the end of the week. We welcome suggestions from you as to what could be done to assist our industry in this legislation.

We appreciate the relationship we have with our state association partners and are committed to the support you provide to our shared members and industry. Please reach out us to with questions, concerns, and most importantly, ideas to allow us all to continue to provide that support.