



March 23, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write today to request that you authorize increased access to unemployment benefits for the many workers impacted by the COVID-19. Specifically, we request that you immediately unlock existing federal funding in the Disaster Unemployment Account by declaring a major disaster quickly for those governors as they request it, or by working with Congress to make this funding available, leading to critically needed and prompt relief.

As the far-reaching impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have begun to touch each of our states, we know we all are seeking every possible remedy to mitigate its impacts to our people. Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) will enable hard working Americans to make ends meet until this emergency passes. In order to ensure a sufficient and sustained safety net for the rapidly growing sectors of workers at risk of losing wages and jobs, we are requesting that you declare COVID-19 a major disaster to make DUA available to all states.

As we continue to see deepening impacts to businesses and workers, our states are doing all we can to support those who must stay home due to COVID-19, have lost their jobs, or have seen their place of employment close. However, even as states enact policies to flexibly provide Unemployment Insurance to those in need, we are still leaving many hourly and independent workers behind who desperately need assistance during this crisis. DUA can help fill this gap in the safety net by providing increased funding and unemployment insurance eligibility to impacted workers who would otherwise be excluded due to the number of hours they have worked or their status as independent contractors. By tapping into this program, we can provide countless workers with wage support that they desperately need to take care of themselves and their families during this difficult time.

To accomplish this, we call for this pandemic to be declared a major disaster in every state that requests it, and that DUA funds be unlocked in those states to provide benefits to more workers.

Should you determine that congressional action is necessary, we ask that your Administration begin working urgently with Congress to pass a legislative remedy providing parity for a pandemic

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with other natural disasters for which DUA has been available in the past. Our congressional delegations stand ready to act if needed.

In the wake of natural disasters such as fires, hurricanes, and floods, these benefits are regularly extended to Americans whose jobs are impacted. It is time that we provide the same support to those hurt by a pandemic like the one crippling our workforce now. Many workers are losing wages as we speak and we have no time to waste in deploying assistance. Please support our nation's workers by taking immediate action to unlock DUA for this rapidly evolving emergency.

Sincerely,



Governor Jay Inslee
State of Washington



Governor Mike Dunleavy
State of Alaska



Governor JB Pritzker
Illinois



Governor Mike DeWine
Ohio