

## District 10

March 25, 2020

**Bobby (Mac) McAuliffe**  
District Director

**Lew "Spike" Dopson**  
Assistant to the Director

The Honorable Tom Wolf  
Governor of Pennsylvania  
225 Main Capitol Building  
501 North 3rd Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Jay Costa  
PA Senate Democratic Leader  
Room: 535 Main Capitol  
Senate Box 203043  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3043

The Honorable Jake Corman  
PA Senate Republican Leader  
Room: 350 Main Capitol  
Senate Box 203034  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3034

The Honorable Frank Dermody  
PA House Democratic Leader  
423 Main Capitol Building  
PO Box 202033  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2033

The Honorable Bryan Cutler  
PA House Republican Leader  
110 Main Capitol Building  
PO Box 202100  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2100

Dear Governor Wolf, Senator Costa, Senator Corman, Representative Dermody, and Representative Cutler:

I am writing to you on behalf of the members of the United Steelworkers union (USW) in Pennsylvania. Right now, our nation is facing an unprecedented health care crisis that has exposed the weaknesses of our worker protections and health care systems and is inflicting a heavy toll on the economy.

We know that you are working hard to protect public health and ensure that the spread of the virus is slowed and eventually stopped. That is our goal as well. One important tool in our collective response is guaranteeing that sick workers are able to stay home and prevent infecting others.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Congress passed the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*. This law provides a tax credit for employers and guarantees employees 80 hours of paid sick leave if they are isolated or quarantined by a medical professional, seeking diagnosis for symptoms of COVID-19, or caring for a sick individual or child whose school is closed due to government orders. **However, the law exempts large employers with over 500 employees in the United States.**

The vast majority of large employers – 89 percent according to the Department of Labor – provide some form of paid sick leave to their employees, with an average of eight days, which is short of the 14-day quarantine recommendation.<sup>1</sup> Republicans and Democrats in Washington, D.C. agreed that large companies should not benefit from a federal tax incentive from something that should already be provided with or without a global pandemic.

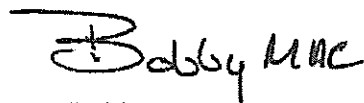
Many USW members have access to *some* paid sick leave, but not enough to stay home for the length of time required to prevent infecting others. Since the passage of the federal law, our members who work at large employers are reporting that these employers are NOT consistently providing paid leave equal to or exceeding 80 hours for coronavirus quarantine, isolation, and recovery.

**In an effort to stop the spread of this virus, we urge you to use your authority to change the law in Pennsylvania to:**

- Require that all employers, regardless of size, provide 80 hours of paid sick leave to full-time employees, consistent with the requirements for smaller firms in the federal *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*. Companies with fewer than 500 employees must comply under federal law and have access to a tax credit to help with those costs.
- Ensure that this requirement goes above and beyond the existing sick leave provisions already existing in collective bargaining agreements.
- Protect employees consistent with federal law and prohibit:
  - Requirements that employees use other paid leave before using this leave,
  - Requirements that employees must find a replacement to cover his or her scheduled work hours,
  - Retaliation against any employee who takes this leave, and
  - Retaliation against any employee who files a complaint or engages in efforts to enforce paid sick leave requirements.

Again, paid sick days are essential to ensuring that sick individuals stay home and prevent exposing others in their workplace. Not all companies are acting responsibly and guaranteeing this leave to workers. **Pennsylvania must protect public health and fill in the gaps in the federal law on ensuring that all employees have access to coronavirus-related paid sick days.** We urge you to take swift action on this matter.

Sincerely,

  
Bobby "Mac" McAuliffe  
District 10 Director

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ebs2.pdf>