

# Underwood Priorities for CARES 2 Act to Help Illinois Families Impacted by coronavirus

## Helping Illinois Families

- Ensure coverage of treatment for coronavirus without cost-sharing for all Americans.
- Include H.R. 1868, the Health Care Affordability Act, in the next relief package, as well as reinsurance policies that will lower premiums while maintaining insurer participation in individual marketplaces.
- Establish a special enrollment period for COVID-19.
- Ensure every American worker has access to FMLA, paid sick leave, and paid family leave.
- Include additional rounds of immediate financial support for individuals.
- Include H.R. 6420, the All Dependent Children Count Act.
- Continue to push for legislation that ensures independent contractors and those who are self-employed have access to worker protections, including income supports like paid leave and unemployment insurance.
- Include robust funding and support for mental health services, including services for veterans, students (K-12 and higher ed) and teachers, and suicide prevention.
- Include H.R. 1767, the Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Expansion Act, and H.R. 1920, the Medicaid BUMP Act, to ensure support for critical services.
- Create a temporary federal tax credit for families who incur additional childcare costs because of circumstances credibly related to coronavirus (i.e. parent is a clinician or first responder working overtime, normal caregiver is immunocompromised, coronavirus-related transportation or logistical barriers to normal childcare, etc.)
- Increase and expand the child tax credit to offset families' additional expenses.
- Allow deferral of student loan payments with no interest for the duration of this crisis and for a period thereafter as students and families get back on their feet.
- Provide targeted student debt relief for borrowers who are currently making payments on their loans.
- Increase IDEA funding to support schools as they face significant challenges and increased current and future costs associated with providing a free and appropriate education to students with disabilities.
- Provide additional funding for school districts and higher education institutions to help cover technology costs (i.e. purchasing laptops and hotspots) so that students are able to participate in distance learning.
- Ensure equity in vaccine and treatment development for coronavirus, including babies and pregnant and lactating women.
- Prevent credit reporting agencies from using adverse credit events related to coronavirus in determining a credit score, and from including them in consumers' credit reports.
- Include language expressing the sense of Congress that that EPA needs to prioritize protecting communities from ethylene oxide and to continue their work on the issue while also ensuring medical supply chains can operate fully.
- Include strong oversight and transparency provisions with common-sense worker and consumer protections that ensure taxpayer funds are being used appropriately.

## Aiding Community Organizations and Entities

- Establish direct federal support for localities with populations under 500,000.
- Allocate additional funding for public health infrastructure and workforce.
- Increase funding for personal protective equipment (PPE) for health care workers, first responders, and essential workers such as pharmacists, grocery store employees, election workers, and childcare providers.
- Include language requiring and directing improved coordination, centralization, and transparency from the Administration in the PPE supply chain.
- Provide direct funding, as well as necessary medical equipment and resources, for hospitals, community health centers, and health systems.
- Include provisions to help states offer and expand voting by mail.
- Provide additional EAC/HAVA funding to support local election authorities, and ensure it can continue to be used to pay for:
  - More staff for processing mailed ballots.
  - More equipment, such as ballot folders, printers, and tabulators.
  - Sanitizing supplies (hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, gloves, etc.)
  - Renting larger sites for polling places.
  - More election judges, particularly ones not in high-risk groups, which may require more money to pay them higher wages.
- Increase federal support for nonprofits affected by coronavirus, including those with over 500 employees.
- Authorize the Secretary of HHS to award grants to states to support activities that strengthen their home- and community-based services (HCBS) benefit, which could be used to facilitate hazard pay to home care workers.
- Ensure support is available for homeless and struggling veterans who may be quarantined or facing additional hardship due to coronavirus.
- Include S.2749, the DOTGOV Act of 2019, or similar legislation to ensure access to government resources.

## Supporting Small Businesses

- Create additional targeted and immediate grant relief for restaurants, small hotel operators, and other small businesses and nonprofits at risk of closing or bankruptcy in the coming weeks.
- Include language ensuring that agricultural small businesses and farms are eligible for Small Business Administration (SBA) loans.
- Set a 0% interest rate for all SBA loans related to coronavirus.
- Eliminate the early payoff penalty on SBA loans related to coronavirus.
- Create a federal tax credit for businesses who incur substantially higher costs for functions essential to responding to coronavirus as the supply chain adjusts to this crisis.
- Implement support for corn growers who will be impacted by lower ethanol demand due to the significant drop in automobile gasoline use.
- Suspend the Trump Administration's retaliatory tariffs to provide economic relief to Illinois farmers and manufacturers.
- Investigate longer-term solutions to address the fact that many insurance policies available to small businesses do not cover damages or business interruption injuries from communicable disease outbreaks, even in a case like this where the state has ordered closures.