



April 14th, 2020

Governor Walz and Members of the Minnesota Legislature,

On behalf of Americans for Prosperity activists across Minnesota, I am writing today to thank you for your swift and targeted action to address the public health and economic challenges associated with the spread of Covid-19.

We all want what's best for society. And in an unprecedented situation like this there are honest questions about how to achieve that. From the beginning of the crisis, we have urged lawmakers to follow a few core principles. First, that any fiscal response or emergency policy changes be temporary in nature. Second, that they be targeted specifically to the purpose of protecting the health and safety of citizens, caregivers, and state employees from COVID-19. Finally, that they be timely, expedited to provide services and benefits to those in need as quickly as possible, while protecting the intent and integrity of such programs.

In addition to providing resources to those who are battling on the front lines of containing and treating the disease, I want to specifically commend you for including the following provisions that remove government barriers that could get in the way of our most vulnerable citizens getting the care they need:

- Expanding access to digital tools and telehealth systems that can help reduce the burden on the health system, improve access to health care, and continue social distancing
- Providing exemptions to statutory limitations on the number of hospital/nursing home beds, removing unnecessary caps that get in the way of addressing essential health care needs

We appreciate the challenges and uncertainty faced by policymakers in addressing the ongoing pandemic and continue to support efforts by the administration and legislature to jointly coordinate an effective response to the virus. However, the extremes that are emerging in this discussion are unhelpful. We should neither ban the bulk of business activity indefinitely nor should we demand a date certain for businesses to function as they did prior to the outbreak.

Businesses should never operate in a manner that irresponsibly risks public health, but neither should they be forced to close if steps can be taken to ensure safe operation. In fact, open-ended business shutdowns can prevent critical supply chains from getting products and services to those who need them most. A better option would be to empower people who can responsibly operate businesses with effective social distancing and without endangering public health. Not only does this keep people employed, mitigating the economic damage to come, but it ensures everyone has what they need to do their part — something that will be even more critical in the weeks and months ahead.

We hope you will consider these principles as you continue your important work on behalf of the public health, safety, and economic security of all Minnesotans. Thank you for your leadership, your efforts to date, and your continued attention to finding a way forward through the disruptions and challenges that containment and mitigation measures continue to present.

Sincerely,

Jason Flohrs
State Director
Americans for Prosperity - Minnesota