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A Note from NMA President and CEO Rich Nolan

“Unprecedented” would be an understatement to describe the situation we all face today. Every industry and individual continues to be profoundly touched by the global COVID-19 pandemic, including the economic and social fallout from the ongoing response to it.

Safety has always been at the core of the National Mining Association’s (NMA) mission and remains paramount as we chart our organization’s response to the crisis. On the policy front, NMA remains laser focused on ensuring mining’s voice is heard. Despite the challenges of working responsibly in a “social distancing” environment, NMA remains continuously engaged in ongoing development of economic relief measures and related coronavirus responses on both the federal and state levels.

In order to increase communication with you in this fast moving environment, we are pleased to launch this new weekly update. We hope it will help distill the flood of COVID-19

information and provide concise information on the developments most likely to affect our mining community.

Through this newsletter, we also plan to share examples of NMA members taking action on the front lines to address this crisis. Sharing with each other the varied and extensive approaches to protecting workers and keeping operations open will help spur additional innovative actions and will also give us information to share through our social media and other communication channels regarding the essential social contributions of our industry.

Stay safe out there,

Rich

SAFETY SHARE: Since we're spending a lot more time there these days, here are seven easy-to-follow [home safety tips](#).

NMA COVID-19 Resources

The National Mining Association has launched a comprehensive suite of online resources for [Coronavirus Assistance and Response](#). Resources include both [health, safety and business assistance](#) for NMA members, and a chronicle of the American [mining industry's response to the current crisis](#).

Just a few examples of the useful resources already available include:

- An interactive map providing up-to-date [state-by-state updates and directives](#).
- Information on the Mine Safety and Health Administration's [response to COVID-19](#).
- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's [guidance on preparing workplaces](#) for COVID-19.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [guidance for manufacturers](#).
- Case studies of NMA member actions, such as those undertaken by [Nevada Gold Mines](#).

- COVID-19 educational [posters](#) suitable for use in workplaces.

Also be sure to watch the latest CORESafety TV video on COVID-19, which provides suggestions on [what mining operations and miners can do](#) to help prevent the greater spread of the virus as they continue operating as essential industries.

NMA and Third Party Voices

NMA and its third party editorials have appeared across the country, speaking to the importance of our industry to the country and economy. These include pieces from NMA's Conor Bernstein, writing on the [value of coal power in a crisis like the coronavirus pandemic](#); academic Dan Ervin, who argues that [now is the moment to address the nation's alarming reliance on minerals imports](#); commentary from Michael Stumo, CEO of the Coalition for a Prosperous America, who focuses on [how this global crisis has highlighted U.S. import dependence](#) and the need to support domestic supply chains for minerals; and infrastructure expert Tom Madison, who suggests policymakers support American competitiveness, [including our mineral and metals supply chain](#). These pieces have appeared in more than a dozen outlets across the country in just the last week.

CARES Act Implementation

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act – also known as the CARES Act – was signed into law on March 27, 2020. Referred to by lawmakers as "Phase 3" of Congress's coronavirus response, the Act is the largest economic stimulus package in U.S. history.

Congress and the Trump administration have moved swiftly to address the economic fallout from the global COVID-19 pandemic. An \$8.3 billion Phase 1 bill supporting coronavirus vaccine research and development was signed into law on March 6, 2020. An

approximately \$104 billion Phase 2 package largely focused on paid sick leave and unemployment benefits for workers and families was signed into law on March 18, 2020.

The sweeping Phase 3 package provides approximately \$2.1 trillion in support through corporate and small business loans, direct household payments, expansion of unemployment benefits, tax credits and deferrals, direct aid to states and hospitals, and support for transportation industries.

A key element of the Phase 3 package is the [Paycheck Protection Program](#) that authorizes up to \$349 billion in forgivable loans to small businesses (500 or fewer employees) to pay their employees during the COVID-19 crisis. The Treasury Department published [information for borrowers](#) and regularly-updated [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the program.

Federal economic stimulus bills also created [tax credits that are available to employers](#) who keep employees on their payroll despite experiencing economic hardship related to COVID-19 or who pay sick or family leave wages to employees who are unable to work or telework due to certain circumstances related to COVID-19.

Additional action by Congress is expected. U.S. Treasury Department asked Congress for [\\$250 billion more](#) to aid small businesses and Congress moved to act on the request [as early as this week](#).

Mining as an Essential Industry

Following assertive lobbying by National Mining Association, U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) updated its memorandum on [Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce](#) to explicitly include miners within its essential workforce designation.

Related to coal mine workers, the new language specifies the inclusion of:

- Workers at coal mines, production facilities, and those involved in manufacturing, transportation, permitting, operation/maintenance and monitoring at coal sites which is critical to ensuring the reliability of the electrical system.
- Workers who produce, process, ship and handle coal used for power generation and manufacturing.

Related to mineral mining workers and mining equipment manufacturers, the new language specifies inclusion of:

- Workers necessary for mining and production of critical minerals, materials and associated essential supply chains, and workers engaged in the manufacture and maintenance of equipment and other infrastructure necessary for mining production and distribution.

NMA issued a [press release](#) welcoming CISA's reaffirmation of mining within the list of 16 critical infrastructure sectors that should maintain their work schedules to help the response to the coronavirus outbreak. NMA President and CEO Rich Nolan also [authored a widely distributed op-ed](#) entitled "America's Mining Industry Deserves Strategic Support to Weather the Storm."

Latest Virus Updates

President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence said they see signs the U.S. coronavirus outbreak is beginning to [level off or stabilize](#).

New York, New Jersey, Louisiana and Illinois reported their [highest daily number of coronavirus deaths](#) on Tuesday, but data from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut suggested that steps to control the coronavirus's spread [might be working](#).

[Stocks rallied](#) on signals that the spread of coronavirus may be slowing.

Wall Street Journal profiled the global rush to research a [cure for the virus](#).

UN World Health Organization announced that the first coronavirus [vaccine trials have begun](#).

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [started conducting antibody tests](#) to determine if people have been infected with the coronavirus, including those who never developed symptoms.

Energy and Mining COVID-19 Impact News

U.S. Energy Information Administration updated its "[Short Term Energy Outlook](#)" to consider coronavirus impacts including forecasting a 3 percent decline in electric power generation in 2020 and a 19 percent decline in total coal consumption. BloombergNEF predicted [plummeting energy use and prices](#).

EIA's revised forecast also predicted U.S. natural gas production will [drop by the fastest pace ever](#) in 2021. *OilPrice.com* reported natural gas prices [could double next year](#).

U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and North American Electric Reliability Corporation [lessened compliance obligations](#) during the coronavirus emergency.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [issued a memo](#) on "COVID-19 Implications for EPA's Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Program" that [provided temporary flexibility](#) on pollution compliance, drawing [mixed reactions from states](#) and [scorn from environmental groups](#). (At the same time, environmental groups and eight Democratic U.S. Senators called on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Interior [to pause rulemakings](#).)

S&P Global scheduled a webinar on "[COVID-19: Impact on the Metals Market](#)" for April 9, 2020.

Tell Us About Your COVID-19 Response

National Mining Association is continually working to gather information about how the COVID-19 crisis is affecting our members. Information will be used in discussions with policymakers and decision makers at all levels of government and will help illustrate how mining is giving back to the communities where we live and work.

Please [contact Ashley Burke](#) with on-going accounts of your responses to the global pandemic.

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