View this email in your browser

COVID-19 UPDATE

NMA THE AMERICAN RESOURCE

Issue 6 (Correction) - May 13, 2020

This Week in COVID-19 News

The next phase of federal legislation to address the health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic is taking a decidedly partisan turn. Reopening and supporting the American economy remains a top priority and the National Mining Association (NMA) remains actively engaged with the White House and multiple branches of government to ensure that mining's interests are considered. The effort includes public communications regarding the essential nature of mining, safety actions taken by our members, and contributions being made by NMA member companies. Plus we have updates on both the crisis and its impact on energy and mining markets.

SAFETY SHARE: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released its **List N Tool, a new web-based application (app)** that allows smart phone users and others to quickly identify disinfectant products that meet EPA's criteria for use against COVID-19.

MINExpo INTERNATIONAL® 2020 Postponed Until 2021

As sponsor of MINExpo INTERNATIONAL® 2020, the NMA team has made its highest priority the health, well-being and safety of exhibitors, attendees, stakeholders and their respective families and colleagues, as well as our event partners in Las Vegas. Due to the advance of COVID-19 around the world, the show will be postponed until September 2021. Our current plan is to hold MINExpo INTERNATIONAL® 2021 in Las Vegas. We are working with our event partners to identify and secure the necessary exhibition facilities and hotel accommodations in Las Vegas for a successful MINExpo INTERNATIONAL 2021. Once the logistical arrangements have been confirmed the new dates will be announced. We hope to have this information to you in the near future. Please visit the **MINExpo website** for the full statement and information for NMA members who are exhibiting or who have registered to attend the 2020 show.

CARES Act – Next Round

House Democratic leadership on Tuesday, May 12, 2020, **unveiled** H.R. 6800, the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act ("HEROES Act"). The bill is a **1,815-page, $3 trillion proposal** to address the health and economic impacts from COVID-19.

The centerpiece of the bill is $900 billion in funding for state and local governments, but it also contains a laundry list of other Democratic spending priorities. Since the introduction of the bill, the **House Appropriations Committee**, the **House Agriculture Committee**, **House Financial Services Committee**, **House Small Business Committee**, and House Ways and Means Committee (**Ways and Means Democrats Emergency Assistance Summary**, **Ways and Means Democrats Family Care for Essential Workers Summary**, **Ways and Means Democrats Health Provisions Summary**, **Ways and Means Democrats Retirement Summary**, **Ways and Means Democrats Unemployment Summary**) have offered additional resources and summaries on specific portions of the new bill.

House members will **return to Washington for the day** on Friday, May 15, to vote on the proposed legislation and potentially also vote on a rule change to allow House members to vote by proxy and hold virtual committee meetings during the pandemic.

The proposed legislation is not expected to advance through the Republican controlled Senate. ***The Hill***, ***The Wall Street Journal***, ***Axios***, and ***Bloomberg*** all published stories detailing the increasingly partisan environment surrounding the next phase of federal legislative response to the pandemic.

In other news, NMA was part of a coalition of groups that signed a **letter** to Rep. Richard Neal, Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, and Sen. Charles Grassley, Chairman, Committee on Finance, raising concerns with recent IRS guidance that ran counter to the CARES Act, and requesting an amendment to the CARES Act in future legislation to ensure PPP loans are not taxable.

Non-discriminatory Lending

A bicameral group of 36 Members of Congress wrote the President this past week to highlight that many industries are encountering financial strains due to COVID-19. Specifically referencing financial institutions that have targeted coal and discriminatory lending practices that the NMA team has raised with our congressional allies, these members of Congress also highlighted that any federal financial relief programs should apply to all eligible businesses and that the financial institutions should not allow political influences to interfere with lending. The letter references an **April 7, 2020, letter to Treasury Secretary Mnuchin and Federal Reserve System Chairman Powell** regarding concerns of political influences resulting in discriminatory lending in the programs authorized in the CARES Act. NMA will continue to work with Congressional offices and the administration to ensure NMA member priorities are heard.

Royality Relief

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) on May 6, 2020, released two specific guidance documents concerning **lease suspension applications** and **royalty rate reduction applications** due to COVID-19. The National Mining Association has been working with DOI and interested NMA member companies on applications for royalty relief. Although the DOI has approved previous royalty relief under individual circumstances, NMA has advocated for specific guidance and individual assistance due to the length of the usual application process and unique circumstances due to COVID-19. NMA is continuing to work with interested members and DOI to answer questions concerning this process.

NMA and Third-Party Voices

The NMA and its third-parties continue to develop materials and place editorials across the country on the importance of our industry to the country and economy. This week, we introduced **a new video** on the antimicrobial properties of minerals.

On the third-party front, **Salem News** carries an op-ed by Terry Jarrett, who has served on both the board of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and the Missouri Public Service Commission, in which he argues that coal will be essential for preserving affordable electricity prices as we recover from COVID-19.

The **Washington Examiner** (DC) ran an op-ed by Mark J. Perry, a professor of economics at the Flint campus of the University of Michigan and scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, in which he asserts there is no reason to depend on China for essential minerals when they are available domestically. Additionally, the **Casper Star-Tribune** (WY) featured an op-ed by Dr. J. Winston Porter, a former assistant administrator of the EPA, in which he argues that the U.S. can no longer afford to rely on China for minerals and must support domestic mineral mining through legislation.

U.S. Virus Response Updates

While the U.S. House of Representatives largely remained in recess, the U.S. Senate **pressed forward with other business**. Committee meetings related to the pandemic included a Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee hearing on "**Safely Getting Back to Work and Back to School**," and a Judiciary Committee hearing on "**Examining Liability During the COVID-19 Pandemic**."

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy **announced his picks** for the House select committee on the coronavirus.

Leader McCarthy also announced the formation of a **China Task Force**.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released a new web-based application that allows users to quickly **identify disinfectant products** that meet EPA's criteria for use against the virus that causes COVID-19. The Agency also continued to **expedite reviews** of new disinfectants that may be added to the list.

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York announced that its Secondary Market Corporate Credit Facility will start **purchasing exchange-traded funds**.

The U.S. Treasury Department and Small Business Administration continued to provide almost daily updates to information about the CARES Act's **Paycheck Protection Program**.

Energy and Mining COVID-19 Impact News

S&P Global reports that half the mines S&P has been tracking that were temporarily closed due to COVID-19 through early April, have now reopened, with the remainder making plans to do so as well.

National Interest reports the coronavirus brought around an economic downturn for the mining industry like no other.

The U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski

(R-AK) led an online policy discussion entitled “Coronavirus pandemic highlights **need to address mineral security**.”

The International Energy Agency published “Clean energy progress after the COVID-19 crisis will need **reliable supplies of critical minerals**.”

Northern Miner reports that a North American cobalt producer will expand cobalt mining in 2021. The increase in battery-grade cobalt production would help reduce U.S. dependence on China.

Subsidiaries of coal producer Paringa Resources **sued the U.S. government** after being denied a Paycheck Protection Program loan because the company is in bankruptcy proceedings.

North American Electric Reliability Corporation’s spring “**Pandemic Preparedness and Operational Assessment**” concluded grid reliability issues could increase if coronavirus impacts extend into the summer demand season.

S&P Global reports that most power companies surveyed are not altering their previous coal retirement plans due to the global pandemic.

EIA’s recent **Uranium Quarterly report** for the first quarter of 2020 shows an 86 percent decrease in uranium production compared to the first quarter of 2019. Production is occurring at four production facilities, down from five in 2019.

E&E Energywire reports that nuclear plants across the U.S are facing a similar challenge of trying to maintain social distancing while moving forward with needed maintenance operations during the pandemic.

Mining Magazine **reports** on ways the global resources sector can manage amid the pandemic.

Coal use in China **bounced back strongly**. But in Poland, many of its larger **coal mines** closed recently in response to COVID-19 outbreaks among employees. Looking to India,

ANZ Research reports that the country's weakened economy resulting from the pandemic will result in lower coking coal demand as well as subdued growth in steel and its raw materials. But ANZ Research also reports that the global pandemic has had relatively little impact of the iron ore market with prices and demand still holding up.

Economic Impact

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported total nonfarm payroll **employment fell by 20.5 million** in April, and the unemployment rate rose to 14.7 percent. It was by far the largest monthly decline in employment in the history of the report, but there may be a silver lining. About 18 million (78.6 percent) of the workers said they were on "temporary layoff," suggesting that the vast majority of nonfarm payroll workers plan to return to work once they are able to do so.

CNBC published "'**Feels like we're at the bottom**': Some executives see signs of recovery in April." *CIO Dive* examined contact tracing and other **technology based approaches** to facilitating employees returning to work.

NMA COVID-19 Resources

NMA is maintaining 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**.

Tell Us About Your COVID-19 Response

The NMA is continually gathering 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 ongoing accounts of your responses to the global pandemic.

Copyright © 2020 NATIONAL MINING ASSOCIATION, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can **update your preferences** or **unsubscribe from this list**.