



Ohio House Democratic Caucus

Governor Mike DeWine
77 S. High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

March 9, 2020

Dear Governor DeWine,

We appreciate your administration's diligent work on preparing the State of Ohio for the coronavirus. As the disease is spreading across our country, we know there will likely be confirmed cases in the state. We need to be ready to contain it, to the extent possible, for the safety of all Ohioans.

One concern we want to raise is how low-income, hourly workers will be able to deal with this virus. We know that 13.9 percent of Ohioans live in poverty¹ and the most common work these individuals do includes jobs in the food, retailer and nursing industries.² These individuals can easily spread the disease through regular and close contact with people who at times may have compromised immune systems, and the importance of containing the outbreak within these populations is particularly important.

We appreciate that the Ohio Department of Health is asking employers to be flexible with their sick leave policies and allowing employees to stay home.³ However, there is no guarantee employers will grant this request, and at the same time, employees who live paycheck-to-paycheck and cannot afford to stay away from their jobs will need income.

For this reason, we are asking the administration to consider creating a temporary paid sick leave program to encourage individuals with the coronavirus to stay home. There are several different revenue sources available: you, as Governor, have the power to declare an emergency and use general revenue funding; Controlling Board's Emergency Purposes Fund could be increased and then quickly appropriated; the Budget Stabilization Fund is currently nearing full capacity; and historically some TANF funds have been reserved for emergencies and unforeseen circumstances.

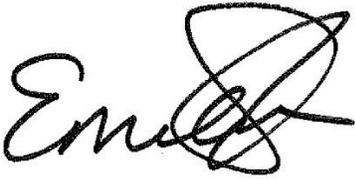
We ask you to consider this request for the safety of all Ohioans, and we stand with you ready to assist in any way possible.

1. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/OH>

2. <https://www.policymattersohio.org/research-policy/fair-economy/work-wages/state-of-working-ohio/state-of-working-ohio-2019-realities-and-remedies>

3. <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home/resources/guidance-for-employers-businesses>

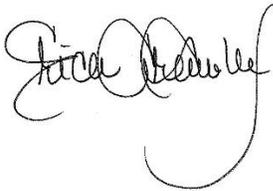
Sincerely,



Rep. Emilia Sykes, Minority Leader
House District 34



Rep. Paula Hicks-Hudson, Minority Whip
House District 44



Rep. Erica Crawley
House District 26



Rep. Beth Liston
House District 21



Rep. David Leland
House District 22



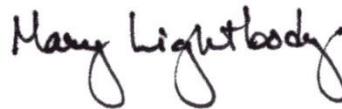
Rep. Janine Boyd
House District 9



Rep. Kristin Boggs, Assistant Minority Leader
House District 18



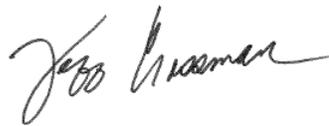
Rep. Rich Brown, Assistant Minority Whip
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House District 19



Rep. Michael Skindell
House District 13



Rep. Jeff Crossman
House District 15



Rep. Juanita Brent
House District 12



Rep. Lisa Sobecki
House District 45



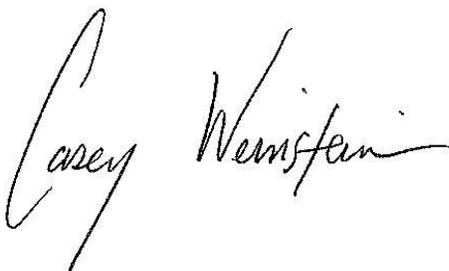
Rep. Bride Sweeney
House District 14



Rep. Tavia Galonski
House District 35



Rep. Michael O'Brien
House District 64



Rep. Casey Weinstein
House District 37



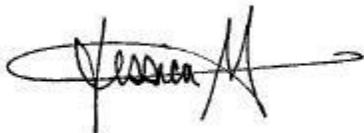
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Rep. Allison Russo
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Rep. John Rogers
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Rep. Jessica Miranda
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Rep. Sedrick Denson
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Rep. Michael Sheehy
House District 46



Rep. Gil Blair
House District 63



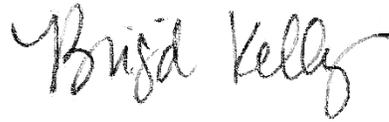
Rep. Michele Lepore-Hagan
House District 58



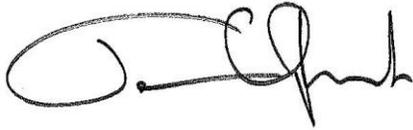
Rep. Kent Smith
House District 8



Rep. Stephanie Howse
House District 11



Rep. Brigid Kelly
House District 31



Rep. Terrence Upchurch
House District 10



Rep. Joe Miller
House District 56



Rep. John Patterson
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Rep. Thomas West
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