

All “Critical Infrastructure Industry” Employees as Defined by DHS Should be Recognized for their Ongoing Contributions to our Country During the COVID-19 Crisis

- As Congress considers additional legislation to address the COVID-19 crisis, it will be important to include provisions that recognize and reward the ongoing contributions that all “critical infrastructure industry” employees are making to ensure public health and safety, safeguard our economy and protect our national security.
 - The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has identified sixteen critical infrastructure sectors and the essential workers needed to maintain the services and functions Americans depend on daily and need to operate resiliently during the COVID-19 pandemic response.
 - As the President declared on March 16: “If you work in a critical infrastructure industry, such as healthcare services and pharmaceutical and food supply, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule.
- Workers in these critical industries are serving even as they face challenges including lack of childcare, transportation, health concerns and exhaustion. These workers deserve more than a pat on the back—they deserve government recognition for the selfless contribution they make by showing up to work each and every day.
- Whether by exempting these essential critical infrastructure workers from federal taxes and requiring immediate adjustments to their tax withholdings, or by providing direct payments as an incentive to continue working, the federal government should stand by these workers as they serve as the nation’s lifeline during this difficult time.
- The food and agriculture sector is proud to be part of America’s critical infrastructure and we salute those who continue to show up to work every day on a farm, in a processing plant, transporting goods to distribution centers and stores, and stocking shelves and selling food. They, along with workers in the other critical infrastructure sectors, should be recognized for their ongoing efforts.
- We urge Congress to recognize all essential workers and not to re-invent the wheel when determining which workers are essential or critical. DHS has done that already and most states have adopted the DHS policy.