



COVID-19 FEDERAL ACTION SUMMARY

This document will be updated frequently. Please check back to see new developments in the federal government's response to COVID-19 and how it impacts rail suppliers.

COVID-19 RELIEF LEGISLATION

- i. Phase Two: [H.R.6201 - Families First COVID-19 Response Act](#)
 - Status: signed into law by President Trump on Wednesday, 3/18
 - Summary:
 - (a) The bill provides free COVID-19 testing, expands food assistance and unemployment benefits, and requires employers to provide additional protections for health care workers.
 - (b) Provides \$1 billion in additional unemployment insurance funding for states.
 - (c) Paid sick leave for businesses with fewer than 500 employees
- ii. Phase Three: [S.3548 - CARES Act](#)
 - Status: An agreement was reached in the Senate in the early morning hours on Wednesday, 3/25. The Senate will vote on the bill either Wednesday or Thursday. After that, the House is expected to attempt to pass the bill by unanimous consent, which if successful does not require the members to travel to Washington but could be stopped by a single member in opposition.
 - Summary:
 - (a) \$500 billion in direct payments to qualified individuals and families, amounting to two \$1,200 checks for most individuals and up to \$3,000 for a family of four.
 - (b) Provides the Small Business Administration with \$562 million for disaster relief loans (more in the Agencies & Regulation section).
 - (c) \$31 billion for the Department of Transportation, including \$25 billion for the Federal Transit Authority and Transit Infrastructure Grants.
 - (i) The American Public Transit Association had requested \$16 billion in direct relief for transit agencies, and a coalition of transit authorities around the country had separately requested \$25 billion in relief.
 - (ii) \$1 billion for Amtrak, which is in line with what they'd requested.



- (d) This bill does treat the Railroad Retirement Board and Railroad Unemployment Insurance the same way it does unemployment programs funded through Social Security. In the second phase, this wasn't included initially but was added in the technical corrections portion after the bill passed the House.
- iii. Phase three won't be the final legislation addressing the crisis, early discussions are already taking place on what might be included in a fourth and fifth piece of legislation.
- However, it's expected that once the Senate passes the third phase it will adjourn until at least 4/20 and if the House succeeds with unanimous consent there isn't a timeline yet for their return.

AGENCIES & REGULATION

iv. Federal Railroad Administration

- The FRA has opened an emergency docket through which railroads can apply for regulatory relief related to the emergency. Depending on the regulation, in some cases that relief will extend to contractors working on those railroads. More information [here](#).

(a) The Association of American Railroads, American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, and American Public Transit Association jointly filed for regulatory relief on a number of issues, including track inspection and repair, operational tests, hours of service, signals and grade crossing inspections, and others.

v. Transportation Security Administration

- The TSA issued a final rule on security training for surface transportation employees on 3/23, but in light of the national COVID-19 emergency delayed its implementation by 90 days to 6/22. More information on that rule is [here](#).

vi. Small Business Administration

- Information about the SBA's response to COVID-19 is available [here](#).
- Small businesses impacted by COVID-19 can apply for disaster relief loans through the SBA [here](#).

vii. Department of Homeland Security

- The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) issued guidance for essential critical infrastructure employees on 3/19 during the COVID-19 response, which can be found [here](#).