

PENSACOLA
FLORIDA'S FIRST & FUTURE



GROVER C. ROBINSON, IV
Mayor

March 16, 2020

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

RE: Coronavirus pool for small business claims

Dear Governor DeSantis,

First, thank you for your leadership in this unprecedented event. While Northwest Florida has certainly never faced a contagion such as the COVID-19, we have in the past experienced a threat to our economic stability with the BP crisis ten years ago.

While I am the most avid supporter of our free market economy, I am proposing that the State of Florida work with the United States government to establish some type of a pool for supporting wages of small businesses. In the BP crisis, BP established a claims fund where individual small business could submit claims and show their normal revenues over a consistent three-year time period and be able to be reimbursed for their losses due to their event. It is extremely likely that many of these small businesses will sustain losses that they can never recover from during this COVID-19 crisis. While I certainly understand that government is not responsible for private business, I am concerned about the wages earned by the employees of these small businesses and the sacrifice that these small businesses have made to close their doors in order to stop the spread of this virus.

My belief is that if some pool were established by the federal government provided to states they could administer it to individual companies who did not reduce payroll and could be reimbursed for those payroll expenses during the time periods where COVID -19 emergencies have been declared and businesses have been asked to significantly curtail their activities to contain the spread of the disease.

I certainly understand the details would need to be much better established and communicated; however, at this particular time I think we need something that continues to sustain both the individual employees and these small businesses during this quarantine. You could certainly cap wages to a certain livable wage to ensure there was enough funding to go around to cover everyone

to that living amount. However, there is something needed to recognize the sacrifices these Florida small businesses and employees are making to contain the spread of this virus.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me. I appreciated your attention and consideration of his matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Robinson, IV', written in a cursive style.

Grover C. Robinson, IV
Mayor

Cc: Senator Marco Rubio
Cc: Senator Rick Scott
Cc: Congressman Matt Gaetz
Cc: Representative Alex Andrade
Cc: Todd Thomson, Greater Pensacola Chamber
