

**Tell the Senate: #FundtheFrontLines and Pass the HEROES Act NOW!**

For over a month, pro-worker leaders of the U.S. House of Representatives have been pushing to pass the HEROES Act, a bold proposal to stabilize our economy and help families survive the health and economic harm caused by COVID-19.

The HEROES Act would provide nearly \$1 trillion in immediate aid to states, cities, counties, and towns and the public programs that serve our residents. But Republicans in the Senate have been dragging their feet since this crucial bill was proposed.

AFSCME Council 5 members have been calling on Congress for months to fund the essential public services that are keeping families afloat in this turbulent time. More than ever, we need Congress to act.

**Call your Senators and tell them: no vacation until you finish your job.** Sign the petition here: [bit.ly/2VCw2pw](https://bit.ly/2VCw2pw)

More than 40 million people have lost their jobs since the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the economy. As states, cities and towns face steep revenue shortfalls, they have laid off more than 1.6 million public service workers. Unemployed workers need a fair shake much more than Senators need a two-week vacation.

**Tell the Senate: pass the HEROES Act before you leave town!**

As public employees, we know how many of our vulnerable neighbors rely on the services we provide. We can't put more lives in danger by slashing public services. To beat the virus and put our economy back together, the federal government must act now.

**Tell the Senate to pass the HEROES Act NOW by signing the petition:** [bit.ly/2VCw2pw](https://bit.ly/2VCw2pw)



**NOW is the time to take action. Call Congress and demand they fund the front lines - before we lose the public services our neighbors are counting on.**

**Legislature Adjourns Special Session, No Deal**

The Legislature adjourned their special session sine die in the early hours of June 20th without several key proposals passing both bodies.

The GOP Senate majority set an arbitrary deadline of one week to find an agreement for a bonding proposal, CARES Act allocations, Governor Walz's supplemental budget, police accountability and reforms, and grants and loans for small businesses impacted by the civil unrest in Minneapolis and St. Paul, among other issues.

Both legislative bodies negotiated fervently throughout the special session, but a deal ultimately could not be found before the Senate adjourned early.

The Legislature did pass ten bills during the special session. Most notably, they passed emergency business grants and loans for businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, CCAP provider rate

increases, DHS and K-12 omnibus policy bills, and a bill to codify certain health-related executive orders into statute. The Senate also passed a resolution to end the statewide peacetime emergency and that bill did not pass through the House.

With the Senate having gone home early, many of the key issues facing Minnesotans will likely be taken up again at the next special session. Governor Walz will need to call a second special session in mid-July if he plans on extending the peacetime emergency in response to COVID-19 for another thirty days.

**Local 722 Regions BOC Reaches TA**

Members of Local 722 in the Business Office Clerical Unit at Regions Hospital reached a TA this week on a two-year contract. The TA includes wage increases of 2% in each year and merit increases across the matrix. It also maintains health insurance premiums at the current rate and clarifies language about callbacks and overtime.

Congrats, siblings!

**Trump Admin Moves to Kill ACA - Again**

For weeks, our union has been calling on Congress to #FundtheFrontLines and support working families through many unimaginable crises. But this week, the Trump Administration decided that they would do precisely the opposite by asking the U.S. Supreme Court to strike down the Affordable Care Act.

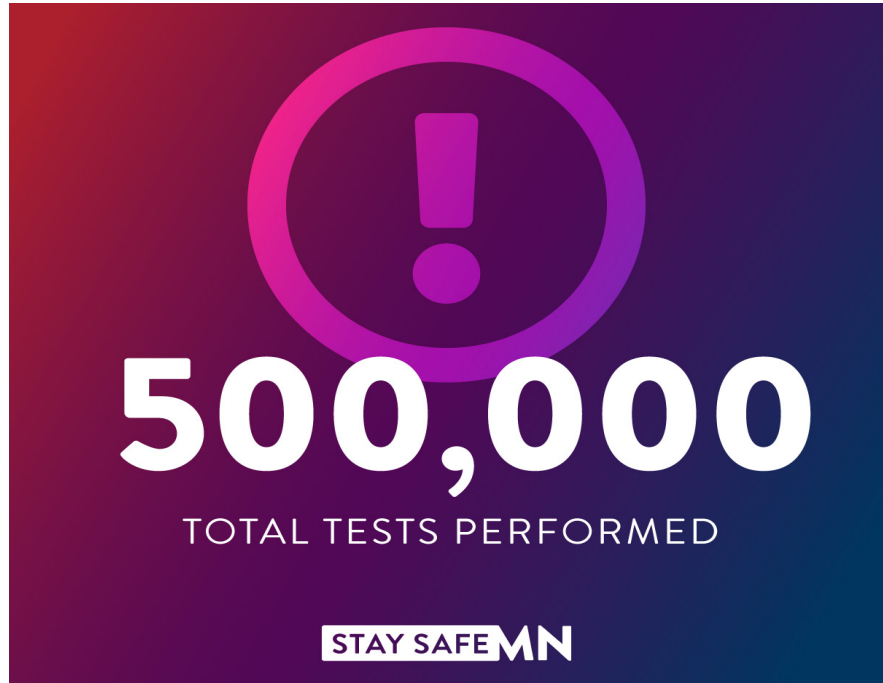
This announcement was made just hours after the administration acknowledged that nearly a half million people who lost their health insurance in the #COVID19 economic crisis now rely on the ACA for health care.

“It is disturbing and disgraceful that the Trump Administration is yet again formally asking the US Supreme Court to overturn the Affordable Care Act,” said AFSCME Council 5 Executive Director Julie Bleyhl. “Overturning the ACA would immediately throw over 300,000 Minnesotans off of their health insurance and deny lifesaving access to health care for millions nationwide during the middle of a global pandemic. This is cruel and wrong. Healthcare must be guaranteed as a right and not a privilege.”

If Trump gets his way, hundreds of thousands of people would immediately lose health care, and the provisions we now take for granted - like the one barring insurers from denying coverage for preexisting conditions - would no longer hold.

“There they go again,” said AFSCME President Lee Saunders. “To take away health coverage from 23 million Americans and gut protections for people with preexisting conditions is reckless at any time. To do so during a global pandemic – in the middle of the worst public health crisis in a century – is a new, cruel, unconscionable and immoral low for this administration.”

Republican leaders have been committed to the cause of repealing the ACA (with no feasible alternative) since it was first passed over a decade ago. We know that if Donald Trump is reelected, his Republican Party will



**This week, Governor Walz announced that MN has completed more than half a million COVID-19 tests and has reached the milestone of developing a daily capacity of 20,000 COVID-19 molecular tests.**

stop at nothing to kill the program that keeps millions of people from having to choose between death and financial ruin.

But as critical as the 2020 elections are, one election is not enough. We must continue the fight to ensure health care is guaranteed to all of us as a right and not a privilege.

**Local 636 Good Samaritan Home Ratifies Contract**

Last week, Members of Local 636 at the Good Samaritan Home in Robbinsdale unanimously ratified a TA on a 4 year contract. This new contract secured nearly 3% raises each year and higher differentials. Members also won an extra holiday.

Congrats, siblings!

**More Weekly Mental Health Check-Ins**

AFSCME members have organized a weekly mental health check-in that brings together union members and perfect strangers to break down barriers, get to know one another, and share their stories.

Members now host weekly virtual check ins every Tuesday morning at 9am and Tuesday evenings at 7pm. These meetings provide a safe and private space for everybody to come together and share their hopes of what a better, modernized mental health system can look like. They hope to expand to more days and times.

Please join us in this movement. You can go to the AFSCME Council 5 website here: [afscmemn.org/mentalbehavioral-health](http://afscmemn.org/mentalbehavioral-health) for more information on their work and join the weekly check-in.

**Resources for Members**

Stay up to date on all the latest news by following @afscmemn5 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Get guidance and resources at [afscmemn.org](http://afscmemn.org) under the COVID-19 tab.

Look for action alerts via email and text so you know when to take action to protect working families. We are all in this together, siblings.