March 27, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This is not the world’s first pandemic, but it is the first of this scale in our lifetime. We are in the midst of a historical moment as it is happening and the story is still being written.

As you all know, on March 23 the Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued a broad Stay-At-Home Executive Order that is in effect until midnight April 13, 2020. While the Executive Order does not contain a specific exemption for construction work, there are a number of exemptions for “critical infrastructure workers”, as well as business and unions. For starters, any business that employs such critical infrastructure workers can continue to operate during the Executive Order’s coverage period. Importantly, that Executive Order does not force either businesses or such critical employees to actually work – it only permits them to do so on a voluntary basis.

Union employees that are designated as “critical infrastructure workers” exception will still need to follow Federal, State, and Local rules while working, which can be summarized as follows:

Six foot separation from workers;

50 person limitation on gatherings previously enacted and still in effect;

Access for union representation to worksites, normally permitted by labor laws, may become subject to reasonable health and safety rules or outright prohibitions;
Members who do not want to work, even with all of these safety precautions, cannot be compelled to do so. We all have our own unique set of circumstances in which we have to decide for ourselves what to do.

Finally, verbal designations of “critical infrastructure worker” status are legally sufficient until midnight March 31, 2020 – thereafter, such designation must be made in writing, by electronic means or published on a public website.

As always we are here for you as we endure this pandemic. Please be safe and healthy!

Fraternally yours,

Terry A. Gilligan
Business Manager
Pipefitters Local 636

P.S. Here is a link to a YouTube video from General President Mark McManus
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSXxKwkBhX0