

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO.263

Rep. Hammoud offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to memorialize the President and Congress of the
2 United States to take various actions to minimize the social and
3 economic impact of and improve response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4 Whereas, COVID-19, also known as the novel coronavirus, has
5 continued to spread throughout Michigan and the United States. The
6 first cases in Michigan were reported on March 10, 2020, and the
7 number of cases has continued to increase. On March 16, 2020, Dr.
8 Joneigh Khaldun, the state's chief medical officer, stated that
9 there was no question that thousands of Michiganders have the
10 virus; and

11 Whereas, Preventing the spread of COVID-19 and mitigating its
12 effects may require prolonged periods of isolation and
13 extraordinary public health measures. Governor Whitmer has issued



1 executive orders prohibiting large gatherings, closing all primary
2 and secondary schools, and requiring the closure of many
3 businesses, including restaurants and movie theaters. President
4 Trump has suggested that these measures may be necessary for
5 several months, and that all gatherings over 10 people be
6 cancelled; and

7 Whereas, Taking these necessary steps to protect public health
8 will place a heavy burden on residents in Michigan and across the
9 country. Many employees will be out of work and forgo wages while
10 ill, under quarantine, caring for their children while schools are
11 closed, or caring for relatives who are ill; and

12 Whereas, Significant action will be required to limit the
13 economic and social effects of this crisis. Some investors fear
14 that the combined effects of the COVID-19 outbreak and the measures
15 taken to contain the virus may lead the United States into an
16 economic recession or even a depression; and

17 Whereas, There are a number of actions available to the
18 federal government that would mitigate the impact of and improve
19 response to the COVID-19 outbreak, including: placing a moratorium
20 on mortgage, rent, and utility payments; prohibiting utility
21 shutoffs; extending the income tax filing deadline; providing
22 support to small businesses; increasing the availability of COVID-
23 19 tests; and deploying the National Guard; and

24 Whereas, Placing a moratorium on mortgage, rent, and utility
25 payments for both businesses and individuals will allow them to
26 weather the period of diminished income without having to decide
27 which necessities to prioritize. Prohibiting utility shutoffs and
28 evictions will also allow individuals and businesses to take the
29 necessary steps to prevent spreading COVID-19 without additional

1 and unnecessary financial concerns. In Michigan, Consumers Energy
2 and DTE Energy have agreed to end shutoffs for seniors and low-
3 income residents; however, a nationwide moratorium is necessary to
4 protect all residents during this crisis; and

5 Whereas, Providing direct financial assistance to struggling
6 families and individuals will help them meet their financial needs
7 while their income is restricted. Proposals to provide this
8 assistance have ranged from a universal basic income for all adults
9 to a refundable tax credit for low-income families. These proposals
10 would help those most in need to weather this period of economic
11 distress; and

12 Whereas, Extending the income tax filing deadline will allow
13 individuals more financial flexibility and provide hundreds of
14 billions of dollars of immediate equity into the market. By
15 delaying the deadline and granting relief from filing and payment
16 penalties, individuals and businesses will have more stability and
17 flexibility to pay for child care, medical care, and other expenses
18 during this unpredictable time; and

19 Whereas, Providing financial support to small businesses will
20 help to ensure that this vital part of our nation's economy is able
21 to survive the crisis. Many small businesses have already or will
22 be forced to temporarily close due to lack of demand and public
23 health orders. Providing support to these entrepreneurs through
24 low-interest loans and other means will help their businesses to
25 remain viable; and

26 Whereas, Increasing the availability of COVID-19 tests will
27 assist states in properly responding to this crisis. There has been
28 a shortage of tests to identify those infected by COVID-19 in the
29 United States, which has limited the ability of state and local

1 health officials to identify and properly isolate these
2 individuals; and

3 Whereas, Deploying the National Guard to assist states will
4 increase the nation's ability to respond to this crisis.
5 Specifically, the National Guard could assist states in high risk
6 areas, in medical facilities, and with sanitation efforts; now,
7 therefore, be it

8 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize
9 the President and Congress of the United States to take various
10 actions to minimize the social and financial impact of and improve
11 response to the COVID-19 outbreak, including: placing a moratorium
12 on mortgage, rent, and utility payments; prohibiting utility
13 shutoffs and evictions; providing direct financial support to
14 individuals; extending the income tax filing deadline; providing
15 support to small businesses; increasing availability of COVID-19
16 tests; and deploying the National Guard to assist states; and be it
17 further

18 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
19 President of the United States, the President of the United States
20 Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives,
21 and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

