

LEGAL UPDATE

House of Representatives Passes Corrected Coronavirus Relief Bill

On Monday, March 16, 2020, the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously approved technical corrections to the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) (the “Act”) that make substantive changes to its provisions. The U.S. Senate may take up the bill on Tuesday, March 17. The bill must be passed by both the House and Senate, and signed by the president, to become law.

Emergency Paid Sick Leave

The Act would require two weeks of partially paid sick leave for government workers and employees of companies with fewer than 500 employees. Leave would be available to some workers who are or may be sick with COVID-19, have to care for a family member with the illness or have a child whose school or childcare facility has closed due to the coronavirus.

Emergency Family and Medical Leave Act

The Act would provide FMLA rights for some employees of companies with fewer than 500 employees, requiring partially paid leave after 10 days (reduced from 14 days) in situations where an employee is unable to work or telework due to school or child care closure related to coronavirus. This provision was scaled back from the original version, which would have provided leave for other reasons.

Other Provisions

The Act would provide funding for economic assistance, including unemployment compensation, and require COVID-19 testing to be provided at no charge. A refundable tax credit for employers that provide paid sick leave benefits as required by the Act is also included.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement that the Treasury would use its regulatory authority to advance funds to some small businesses to cover the cost of providing paid sick leave.

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Highlights

Saturday, March 14, 2020

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Act.

Monday, March 16, 2020

Technical corrections to the Act were passed by the House.

Tuesday, March 17, 2020

The U.S. Senate may take up the bill.

December 31, 2020

Emergency leave benefits for workers provided under the Act would expire.

The Act would provide several billion dollars in federal aid to address the coronavirus outbreak.