

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Tony Evers
Governor
115 East State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707

Re: Need to Continue Insurance Operations as a Part of a Stay at Home Order in Response to COVID-19

Dear Governor Evers:

I'm writing to you today to request consideration of insurance as an essential service to your constituents as your office makes decisions concerning COVID-19 mitigation strategies. NAMIC membership includes more than 1,400 member companies. The association supports regional and local mutual insurance companies on main streets across America and many of the country's largest national insurers. NAMIC member companies write \$268 billion in annual premiums. Our members account for 59 percent of homeowners, 46 percent of automobile, and 29 percent of the business insurance markets.

Yesterday, California Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20 (<https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3.19.20-EO-N-33-20-COVID-19-HEALTH-ORDER-03.19.2020-signed.pdf>), which requires Californians to "stay home or at their place of residence except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of the federal critical infrastructures sectors."

These sectors are outlined in <https://www.cisa.gov/identifying-critical-infrastructure-during-covid-19>, from the federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). One sector in the list of 16 is the "Financial Services Sector," which includes insurance companies. The document specifically notes the importance of the transfer of financial risks within society.

While NAMIC expresses no opinion at this time on whether such an order is appropriate for Wisconsin, if there is to be an order or similar expression of public policy we believe it should contain an exception for critical property/casualty insurance operations. Ideally it would be similar to the California Order and specifically incorporate the CISA standard. Uniformity minimizes confusion and would be particularly beneficial in population areas that straddle state borders.

NAMIC will be the first to agree that insurance companies should not use the exemption to maintain what was the status quo prior to the COVID-19 emergency. Those employees who can do their jobs from a remote location will do so. But not every job can be done from one's home and meet the needs of insureds. Three examples show why:



- There will be storms and other disasters in the coming months. Adjusters need to be deployed in order to start the process of getting peoples' lives back in order.
- Claims checks must be processed, or families will not have the funds they need to pay their bills.
- Critical safety activities and inspections, particularly in workers compensation, cannot be completely deferred.

NAMIC would be happy to visit at your earliest convenience to discuss these issues more fully with you and Commissioner Afable in order to best serve the public during this uncertain time.

Thank you for your consideration,

Erin Collins
Vice President - State Affairs
National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies
804.878.6473 Cell www.namic.org

cc: Commissioner Mark Afable, State Department of Insurance