

Sisters and Brothers,

Local 701 continues to closely monitor this constantly changing COVID-19 pandemic. The news surrounding this outbreak changes by the hour and the mandates from our local and federal governments also seems to be updating at a rapid pace. This draws concern from our members and their families.

First and foremost, I want to commend each and every one of our members for rising to the challenges we're confronted with. I am extremely proud of each one of our members that fixes the vehicles that deliver the goods, the medication and the supplies to ensure our communities continue to function forward. Our work is often times taken for granted. It's through your hard work and resilience though that each of you should rightfully be commended.

It is essential that we work in a safe and healthy environment. Local 701 continues to be very concerned about the way our shop locations are handling the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been in continued communications daily with most of our companies that employ our members, and their concern, like ours is avoiding putting our members at risk as we remain focused on the safety of our membership during this pandemic. Several shops have chosen, in lieu of a layoff, to work a reduced work week. This ensures each employer continues to pay in towards your family's health insurance so that our members continue to have their insurance during this unprecedented time. We are working with several of our employers that have attendance policies, that the language inclusive in those policies as it relates to time off be waived under the circumstances.

In compliance with state and federal mandates regarding large gatherings, we continue to evaluate our actions moving forward with our member's safety and service at the forefront of our considerations. We are limiting shop visits by your Representatives to only going into your shop to handle a problem that cannot be handled by a phone call with management. This will help limit exposure or cross-contaminate shops if one our members has the virus with no symptoms.

We have requested and received special dispensation from our International President Bob Martinez to properly excuse any member and/or Steward at our upcoming Monthly Membership Meetings while the pandemic continues.

We also closed our Training Facility and discontinued conducting classes during this time. We plan on re-opening when it is safe to do so.

At this time, our Union Hall and Health & Welfare and Pension Fund Offices are open as we are committed to continuing to provide our members with continuous service. Health claims will continue to be paid, our representational duties will continue as advocates for our members during their time of need and Pension checks will continue to be mailed. Just as a reminder, those of our members covered under the Local 701 Health Plan – this is a great opportunity to utilize the Teladoc benefit should you require any medical assistance.

We will continue to keep you abreast of any changes moving forward on our website, our E-Alerts and our Facebook page. If you know of anyone who is not receiving E Alerts please direct them to our website where they can sign up for the Alerts moving forward. In the meantime, should you have any symptoms of any illness we ask that you please not visit the Union Hall or the Benefits Office. Also, follow the guidelines of the CDC website for any information on the COVID-19 virus. Please be safe, work safe and take every precaution for yourself and your family members. We will get through this together.

In Solidarity,
Sam Cicinelli
Directing Business Representative / Organizer