



March 18, 2020

The Honorable Karen Spilka  
President, Massachusetts State Senate  
State House, Room 332  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear President Spilka:

As our state, nation and world navigate the unfolding public health crises before us, some of the immediate needs of our front-line workers responding to COVID-19 are coming into focus. I am writing to request your immediate support for the concepts outlined in the following two bills:

**Senate Docket 2870** – This legislation would create a sick bank to cover any state employee who becomes quarantined or ill as a result of COVID-19 infection and does not have sufficient sick time banked in order to protect their wages. NAGE has been working with the Baker Administration to ensure that non-emergency employees can work remotely, however there are many agencies delivering core functions through the pandemic including DPH, DPU and the RMV just to name a few. These workers are putting their health and livelihoods at risk, and we must do everything in our power to protect them as they meet the challenges before us.

**Senate Docket 2865** – This bill would protect our first responders who become ill with COVID-19 on the presumption that it was transmitted in the line of duty. The bill will ensure that their wages and benefits continue during recovery as if they were on duty with no loss of sick, personal or vacation time. We are asking our first responders to protect us. We need to make sure that we are protecting them.

The unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 crisis requires swift action and continued communication in the weeks and months ahead. I urge passage of these initiatives as soon as possible. Thank you for your leadership during these trying times. Please know that as a partner in government, we are committed to doing everything we can to protect the employees of our Commonwealth and the citizens we serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David J. Holway'.

David J. Holway