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Adams Leads Briefing on Worker Safety Crisis Caused by COVID-19

Alma Adams Press [sam.spencer@mail.house.gov]

Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2020 9:33 PM

To: [Steve Johnston](#)

Adams Leads Briefing on Worker Safety Crisis Caused by COVID-19

"If OSHA will not act, Congress will to ensure workers do not have to choose between their jobs and their health."

Washington – Today, **Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. (NC-12)** led a Subcommittee on Workforce Protections virtual Member [briefing](#) to examine the worker safety crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The briefing, entitled “Protecting Workers from COVID-19,” focused on how, despite rising death tolls among workers, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) – the only agency in the federal government with the authority to enforce safe working conditions – has not taken meaningful action to protect workers from COVID-19.

Although OSHA has issued voluntary guidelines for various sectors—such as health care, meat and poultry processing and retail operations—the agency has not used its authority under the Occupational Safety and Health Act to issue an enforceable Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) that would establish mandatory requirements for workplace safety.

“Hospital, nursing home, meatpacking, retail, warehouse, prison and many other essential workers are facing serious risks in the workplace, with many getting sick and dying, and OSHA has been missing in action, refusing to issue an emergency temporary standard to protect these workers,” **said Subcommittee Chair Alma Adams (NC-12)**. “If OSHA will not act, Congress will to ensure workers do not have to choose between their jobs and their health.”

On May 12, the House introduced the **HEROES Act**, which requires OSHA to issue an emergency temporary standard that covers all workers. That idea was first proposed by **Adams**, who introduced [The COVID-19 Every Worker Protection Act](#) in April to require OSHA to issue an Emergency Temporary Standard that establishes a legal obligation for all workplaces to implement infectious disease exposure control plans to keep workers safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The briefing included Ademola Oyefeso of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, and Dr. David Michaels, a professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at the

Milken Institute School of Public Health of the George Washington University.

Watch the full briefing [here](#).

Congresswoman Alma Adams represents North Carolina's 12th Congressional District (Charlotte) serves as Vice Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture. Additionally, she serves on the House Financial Services Committee and the House Education & Labor Committee, where she serves as Chair of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee.

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Sam Spencer
Deputy Chief of Staff | Communications Director
Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, NC-12
2436 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-1510 Fax: 202-225-1512

Connect with us



Office of Congresswoman Alma Adams | 801 E. Morehead St, Suite 150, Charlotte, NC 28202
Phone: 704-344-9950

[Unsubscribe sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org](mailto:sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org)

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