

LAST CHANCE FOR THE 2021 WPMA SCHOLARSHIPS!

This is the last reminder for you and your employees' children to send in their applications for the 2021 WPMA scholarships. Scholarship applications must be e-mailed to kathym@wpma.com or postmarked on or before Monday, March 1, 2021 in order to be considered for the available scholarships. Usually, there are less than 10 applicants for each WPMA state scholarship and for the associate member scholarship, which makes the chances of receiving a scholarship very good. Applicant qualification information and the scholarship applications are available to download at <https://www.wpma.com/pdf/scholarship/Scholarship-Application-eForm06-2020.pdf>. The WPMA scholarships pay \$500 per semester for up to eight semesters, for a total of \$4,000. Employers, please remind your employees to download an application right away, and give their students a chance for some extra financial help in college!

UPDATE ON DC CONFERENCE AND "DAY ON THE HILL"

Unfortunately, the Energy Marketers of America Executive Committee has made the tough decision to not go forward with our in-person DC Conference and "Day on the Hill" scheduled for May 12-14. Washington, DC is not expected to lift the indoor gathering limit by May and Congress is unlikely to allow in-person meetings this year.

The Executive Committee still plans to have a Virtual Spring Conference and has approved a new schedule for May 10-14. Our Virtual Day on the Hill with lawmakers will be held on Wednesday, May 12th. Click [here](#) for the details.

SBA ADOPTS CHANGES TO PPP PROGRAM TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR SMALL BUSINESSES TO OBTAIN LOANS

The Small Business Administration (SBA) announced a plan this week to ensure that more funding from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) pandemic relief loans will go to the smallest of small businesses. PPP is a subsidized loan program designed to help small businesses stay afloat during temporary closures and revenue shortfalls caused by the corona virus pandemic. Loans are offered at a 1 percent interest rate that can later be forgiven. The funds are used to keep employees on the payroll during the pandemic.

According to the SBA, small businesses account for 44 percent of U.S. GDP, create two-thirds of net new jobs, and employ nearly half of all workers nationwide. The targeted relief is needed to prevent larger businesses with banking connections from draining PPP funds before smaller businesses have a chance to apply for relief. To achieve this goal, the SBA is adopting the following qualifying criteria for businesses with 20 or fewer employees:

- Establish an **exclusive** 14-day application period for PPP loans limited to employers with 20 or fewer employees.
- Revise the PPP funding formula to make more loans available for sole proprietors, independent contractors and self-employed individuals.
- Eliminate restrictions that bar individuals from PPP loans due to prior non-fraud felony convictions and those who defaulted on, or in delinquency of federal guaranteed student loans.
- Open PPP loans to applicants with Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITIN).

The 14-day PPP loan application exclusivity period for businesses with 20 or fewer employees started on Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 9 a.m. The remaining changes described above will be implemented during the first week of March. The SBA reported Monday that it approved more than 1.9 million PPP loans for a total of \$40 billion from January 11 through February 21. The application window for the current, \$284 billion available for PPP loans is scheduled to close March 31. Congress has yet to decide on a PPP program extension.

Click [here](#) for more information.

FMCSA ISSUES WAIVER EXTENDING VALIDITY OF EXPIRING CDL LICENSES AND DRIVER MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) announced it is extending the waiver permitting states to delay renewal of commercial driver licenses (CDL) and commercial learner permits (CLP) until May 31, 2021. The current waiver is set to expire on February 28, 2021. FMCSA said the waiver is needed because many states continue to experience greater than normal employee absences, reduced hours of operation, or closed offices of their State Driver Licensing Agencies (SDLAs) due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. As a result, drivers are unable to renew expiring CDL licenses or continue to operate under a CDL learners permit.

The FMCSA waiver **permits** but does not require SDLAs to extend the validity of CDL licenses and learners permits expiring after March 31, 2020 until May 31, 2021. Some states may implement the FMCSA waiver extending the validity of expiring CDLs and CLPs, while others may not due to return to normal operating conditions. The FMCSA is leaving it up to each state to decide whether COVID-19 restrictions justify a waiver extension.

However, the FMCSA is **requiring** states to waive until May 31, 2021, the requirement that CDL and CLP holders undergo a medical examination and obtain a medical certification to operate a commercial motor vehicle certification. For the waiver to apply, drivers must have proof of a valid medical certification and any required medical variance or exemption that expired on or after December 1, 2020. During the same period, states are prohibited from downgrading the “certified” status off these drivers as well. The FMCSA waiver also applies to drivers holding CDL licenses issued by Mexico and Canada and operating within the United States.

The waiver covers States, CDL holders, CLP holders for the period beginning at 12:00 a.m. on March 1, 2021, through 11:59 p.m. on May 31, 2021. The waiver does not apply to any CDL or CLP holders with CDL licenses or permits that expired before March 1, 2020, medical certificates issued for less than 90 days or those diagnosed with a disqualifying disease since their last medical examination. Also, drivers must continue to carry their CDL medical certificates, variances and licenses. The FMCSA waiver does not apply to HAZMAT endorsements. The waiver can be downloaded here: [FMCSA CDL Waiver](#).

CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE

Update on Minimum Wage Hike

Today, the House will consider COVID relief legislation under reconciliation. Below are notable provisions in the House legislation, however, not all of these provisions will survive the Senate’s strict budget reconciliation parameters. On Thursday evening, the Senate parliamentarian ruled that a minimum wage increase could not be included in a reconciliation process, determining the provision violated Senate budget rules.

- Direct payments worth up to \$1,400 per person.
- Extension of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation programs.
- Extension of the 15 percent increase in food stamp benefits through September, instead of allowing it to expire at the end of June.
- \$880 million for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).
- Extension of the employee retention tax credit through December 31, 2021.
- Extension of tax credits for employer-provided paid sick and family leave through September 30th.
- \$4.5 billion for LIHEAP
- \$19.1 billion to state and local governments to help low-income households cover back rent and utility bills.
- Expansion of the child tax credit to \$3,600 for children under 6 and \$3,000 for children under age 18.
- \$15 billion to the Emergency Injury Disaster Loan program.
- An additional \$7 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program.
- \$350 billion to state and local governments, as well as tribes and territories.

And, despite opposition from Senators Manchin (D-WV) and Sinema (D-AZ), increases the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025 in stages.

SENATE COMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

On Wednesday, the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee held a hearing entitled: "Building Back Better: Investing in Transportation while Addressing Climate Change, Improving Equity, and Fostering Economic Growth and Innovation." Testifying before the Committee included: Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, Denver Michael Mayor Hancock, and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials President Victoria Sheehan.

Senate EPW Committee Chairman Tom Carper (D-DE) said in his opening statement; “Auto manufacturers are preparing to greatly expand their lines of electric and hydrogen-fueled vehicles, but too often, drivers lack access to the charging or fueling stations they require. America needs to build corridors of charging stations and hydrogen fueling stations across this country. Now, the most challenging part of any discussion on transportation infrastructure—how are we going to pay for it? I’d suggest that those of us who use our nation’s roads, highways, and bridges have a responsibility to help pay for them.”

Ranking member Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) warned her colleagues against proceeding with a partisan infrastructure bill, referring implicitly to the House’s bill from last Congress, H.R. 2. The Senator from West Virginia said, “The strong bipartisan support that exists for a surface transportation reauthorization bill and other infrastructure legislation should not

extend to a multitrillion dollar package that is stocked full of other ideologically-driven, one-size-fits-all policies that tie the hands of our states and our communities.” She also warned against “partisan or lightning-rod pay-fors... that could sink a bill.”

Last Congress, the House Democrats approved a comprehensive infrastructure bill known as “The Moving Forward Act” (H.R. 2) and are expected to reintroduce similar legislation soon. Click [here](#) for a complete breakdown of provisions important to energy marketers that was passed along party lines in the House last year. The Senate did not consider H.R. 2, although the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee passed its own surface transportation bill last year, S. 2302. Congress eventually approved a short-term reauthorization of surface transportation programs into the September 2021 to give it time to develop an infrastructure bill that can pass both chambers of Congress.

Senate democrats, now in the majority, could turn to budget reconciliation (needing only 51 Senate votes) to approve it in the new Congress. Using budget reconciliation tactics still faces a tough hill to climb given that Senator Manchin (D-WV) and other Senate moderates are unlikely to give Senate liberals a free ride to pass an aggressive green infrastructure package. Senator Manchin (D-WV) recently said that a value-added tax (VAT) could be the “only tool” available for Congress to pay for an infrastructure package instead of hiking motor fuels taxes, however, he acknowledged that it would be difficult to increase taxes during a pandemic.

EMA is currently urging lawmakers to protect small businesses by ensuring that at least one-third of Alternative Energy Grant Program funding (included in both the House and Senate highway bills last year) to be dedicated to small, independent fuel marketing businesses with less than 500 employees who can diversify and ensure consumers pay a competitive price for EV charging and other alternative energy sources. Furthermore, EMA is urging Congress to prevent utilities who use ratepayer funds to expand EV infrastructure from participating in the grant program as well as uphold Congress’s original prohibition of commercial services at interstate areas.

EMA URGES CONGRESS TO UPHOLD PROHIBITION OF REST STOP COMMERCIALIZATION

This week, EMA, NATSO, NACS and SIGMA continued its’ decade long fight and joined other associations in a [letter](#) urging Congress to oppose commercialization of interstate Rest Stops.

Last Congress, to the disadvantage of small and medium size business owners, H.R. 2 included a provision that would allow EV chargers at rest areas. Allowing EV chargers at rest areas would undermine fuel marketer investments in U.S. infrastructure by eliminating the need for customers to stop at highway exit retail stores.

When Congress created the Interstate Highway System in 1956, Congress and community leaders feared that local businesses, jobs, and tax bases would shrink as motorists and truck drivers bypassed their cities and towns. For this reason, Congress prohibited new Interstate rest areas from offering commercial services, such as food and convenience items. The result – a thriving and competitive business environment along interstate exits.

EMA’s message to Congress is simple, “Uphold Congress’s original prohibition of commercial services at interstate areas.”

EMLI (PMLI) REGISTRATION IS OPEN NOW

We are excited to announce that registration is open for the Energy Marketers Leadership Institute (EMLI)!

EMLI is new and improved and is designed to make it easier and more affordable for WPMA members to attend. The EMLI programs will be delivered online via Zoom video conference and will include breakout rooms so that the leaders who are attending can interact and learn together.

Special thanks to Lea McCullough for her leadership in working with Meridian to design and deliver the EMLI programs. For more information on how to register go to: <https://emamasters.com/energy-marketers-leadership-institute/>

WPMA COVID-19 - CRITICAL REFERENCES FOR MEMBERS

Please visit our web site for up-to-date information related to your business and the COVID-19 pandemic. You will find the link on our home page at www.wpma.com.

MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES - YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE!

WPMA welcomes industry-related articles for publication in the WPMA News magazine. All members and associate members of WPMA are eligible to submit items for publication. Articles will be included as space allows, and no self-promoting articles or editorials will be accepted. WPMA reserves the right to edit and make adaption of such contributions to accommodate the magazine's space and style. Please submit articles or content to Jan Roothoff, WPMA Administration/IT Director at janr@wpma.com, or mail to Jan Roothoff, Western Petroleum Marketers Association, PO Box 571500, Murray, UT 84157-1500. Submissions for the Winter edition of WPMA News magazine are due before November 1st. Later submissions will be considered for the Spring issue.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

March 15, 2021 – Hawaii (HPMA) Golf Tournament – Oahu Country Club – Honolulu, HI
May 6-7, 2021 - Nevada (NPM&CSA) Big Dogs - Red Rock Hotel & Casino - Las Vegas, NV
June 1-2, 2021 - Montana (MPMCSA) Convention -Fairmont Hot Springs Resort - Fairmont, MT
June 21-24, 2021 - Washington (WIED) Convention - Suncadia Resort - Cle Elum, WA
June 24, 2021 - Utah (UPMRA) Summer Golf Classic - Bountiful Ridge GC - Bountiful, UT
July 17-19, 2021 - Oregon (OFA) Annual Conference - Sunriver Resort - Sunriver, OR
August 4-6, 2021 - Idaho (IPM&CSA) Convention - Sun Valley Resort - Sun Valley, ID
August 23-25, 2021 - New Mexico (NMPMA) Convention - Sandia Resort & Casino - Albuquerque, NM
September 15-17, 2021 - Utah (UPMRA) Convention - Sheraton Park City Hotel - Park City, UT
February 22-24, 2022 – WPMA Convention & Expo – Mirage Hotel– Las Vegas, NV

Be sure to subscribe to all of our social channels for great tips, industry trends, and insider information about association activities and upcoming events!



Petro Pete: *"I'm not lazy. It's called selective participation."*

© 2021 Western Petroleum Marketers Association - All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means - graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or otherwise. The information herein is also intended for the sole purpose of members of the Western Petroleum Marketers Association (WPMA). Any other use is strictly prohibited without the express written consent of the WPMA.

If you do not wish to receive information via fax or e-mail, please contact WPMA at: (801) 263-9762, Fax: (801) 262-9413, or e-mail: janr@wpma.com. Thanks.