



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

GARLIN GILCHRIST II  
LT. GOVERNOR

January 18, 2019

The Honorable Alexander Acosta  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Acosta,

I am writing to respectfully request that the Department of Labor waive existing unemployment insurance eligibility rules under 20 CFR Section 609.3(d) for the State of Michigan to allow us to provide unemployment compensation to federal employees who are required to work without pay during the government shutdown. I am also requesting that the Department of Labor work with us to remedy any short-term damage that providing UI may do to our UI trust funds. As Governor, it is my responsibility to ensure the hardworking people I represent have the resources they need to provide for themselves and their families. It is my hope that we can work together to ensure I am able to fulfill this responsibility.

This federal government shutdown is now the longest in history, and is making it difficult for thousands of federal workers in our State to make ends meet. It is particularly difficult for the thousands of federal employees who are currently being asked to work without pay. These workers especially need our help to ensure they can survive the shutdown without losing their homes or their ability to pay for necessities.

As leaders, we have a responsibility to the people to work together to ensure they have the resources they need while this shutdown drags on. To that end, I again ask that the Department of Labor approve our waiver request to provide the regulatory flexibility needed to ease the financial burden confronting these workers through no fault of their own. If 20 CFR Section 609.3(d) is inflexible on this point, the Department of Labor should work expeditiously with congressional leaders on a change to the statute to allow states like Michigan the ability to offer this critical assistance to workers and their families.

I thank you for your consideration and look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gretchen Whitmer".

Gretchen Whitmer