March 23, 2020

The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer  
Governor  
State of Michigan

Dear Governor Whitmer:

On behalf of the Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI), the trade association for manufacturers of HVACR and water heating equipment, thank you for your leadership and your proactive efforts to protect and support the people of Michigan, who are being severely impacted by the COVID-19 coronavirus health emergency.

AHRI’s more than 300 member companies that manufacture quality, efficient, and innovative residential and commercial air conditioning, space heating, water heating, and commercial refrigeration equipment and components are doing their part to help stop the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus by continuing to operate so as to supply our essential products during this national crisis. Without reliable HVACR and water heating equipment, the challenges faced by our country during this difficult time would be greatly increased.

Maintaining a strong HVACR and water heating industry is fundamental to the American way of life – and a vital necessity given the unique challenges of today. Air conditioning, heating, water heating, and refrigeration are essential to maintaining healthy, livable conditions in homes and buildings, never more important as people face new and unusual restrictions. The HVACR and water heating industry also serves many critically important functions in our economy, including keeping food and medicine safe, enabling the safe transport of critical perishable goods, air filtration, and water heating that is essential for hygiene.

Therefore, we ask you, Governor Whitmer, as you contemplate restrictions designed to slow the spread of the deadly virus, to designate as essential services HVACR and water heating equipment manufacturers, along with the businesses that distribute, install, and maintain that equipment. These products play a critical role in ensuring public health and safety, particularly to those who are sheltering in place in their homes.

Thank you for your consideration. We are committed to continuing to do our part to ensure the health and safety of the residents of Michigan.

Respectfully,

Stephen R. Yurek  
President & CEO

cc: Megan Groen, Health Policy Advisor, State Operation Emergency Center