

March 26, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas
State Capitol
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711
Transmitted via governor@gov.texas.gov

1524 S. Interstate 35, Suite 180
Austin, Texas 78704
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RE: COVID-19 and Closure of Non-Essential Businesses

Dear Governor Abbott:

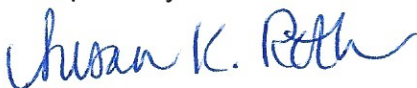
On behalf of the 10,000 Texas members of the **American Society of Civil Engineers** (ASCE), we appreciate your strong leadership during this public health crisis due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). We understand the actions you must take and appreciate your administration's decisions to keep Texans safe.

Based on recent statements regarding individuals who do not have an essential reason for leaving to remain at home and for all non-essential businesses to close, the Texas Section of ASCE asks that you **designate civil engineering as an essential service**. This will avoid closure of the firms who employ civil engineers whom support critical infrastructure services. The moral obligation of licensed engineers is to hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of all individuals. Our infrastructure is at risk if we are unable to continue with our planning, design and construction oversight work that is essential for public safety. Ongoing construction projects require inspections, and engineers must certify their designs in the field and in the office due to associated liabilities.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security as well as other federal agencies have designated public works, water, wastewater, transportation, energy, communications, and information technology as 'critical infrastructure.' California, Illinois, and New York have included exemptions for engineering and construction related personnel, and public construction activities in their recent 'shelter-in-place' orders, and these services have been deemed 'essential.' Civil engineers play a critical role in inspecting and improving necessary infrastructure and other areas of the built environment so important to our daily lives.

Again, we thank you for your leadership during this challenging time and urge you to recognize the civil engineering profession as essential to the functioning of the state of Texas and a critical service.

Respectfully,



Susan K. Roth, P.E., PMP
President