



National Association of FSA County Office Employees

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Greetings NASCOE Family,

Many of you have been watching the news and following the development of the Coronavirus, otherwise known as COVID-19. In just the last few days, we've seen many events get cancelled, such as the Farm Bureau Leadership Conference in Kentucky and the Houston Livestock show and Rodeo. Sporting leagues are canceling games or ending their seasons early. These cancellations are disruptive and inconvenient, but they are being canceled out of an abundance of caution for everyone's safety. NASCOE and our affiliates are unfortunately required to make similar difficult decisions.

USDA and FSA have implemented travel restrictions for any purpose that is non-essential, which we understand may include employee association meetings. This means that it is possible we will not have WDC representatives at our meetings to provide us with program updates or participate in Q&A's. If this was our only concern, we would likely continue with business as usual. However, we have to think about all of our members and partners that would be required to travel to our meetings, in some cases from or through areas that are impacted by the virus. While we very much enjoy meeting together and conducting the great work of this association, nothing we have to say would ever be worth jeopardizing anyone's health. Recently, the NASCOE Executive Committee met and determined that it would not be in the best of interest of NASCOE or our members to hold face to face gatherings. For now, our remaining upcoming NASCOE Area Rallies have been postponed. We know this is disappointing for many of you, particularly those who will have to cancel or change their travel plans. NASCOE leadership did not come to this decision lightly. The Area Executives will be sharing more information with membership regarding the changes to the rallies as details are worked out.

Every NASCOE state association will have to make their own decisions regarding whether to continue with planned conventions or annual meetings. NASCOE is strongly advising all state associations to consider taking similar steps as we have on a national level.

It is our hope and expectation that these disruptions will be short in duration and that we'll be back to normal operations very soon. **As this point, we do not anticipate any changes to our National Convention in Georgia later this summer.** NASCOE is requesting that members please not make any travel plan changes for the National Convention at this time. If other circumstances require you to change your plans, it is extremely important that you follow normal protocol and contact your NASCOE Area Executive to cancel your room reservation. Of course, the NASCOE Executive Committee will continue to monitor the situation and make adjustments as appropriate.

Finally, beyond affecting some of our meetings, we know that there are concerns about how COVID-19 will impact you at work. We have been in regular contact with WDC to get as much information as is available. In the coming days, NASCOE will be collecting and consolidating information we have for distribution to the membership. This effort will be similar to how we passed along information during the recent furloughs. Now would be a good time for everyone to verify with their state association that their contact information is correct, especially those members who are not receiving updates. Please be on the lookout for more communication soon.

Again, we know that these disruptions are frustrating to everyone. Please be patient with us as we work through these challenging situations. And most importantly, please be safe and protect yourselves and your families.

Yours Truly,



Brandon J. Wilson
NASCOE President