Natalie E. Tennant
Secretary of State
State of West Virginia

January 13, 2014

The Honorable Tim Miley
Speaker, West Virginia House of Delegates
Building 1, Room 228M
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Speaker Miley,

I applaud the Legislature's swift action to provide emergency resources to West Virginia businesses impacted by the water emergency that resulted from the January 9, 2014 chemical spill into the Elk River.

As you know, I am supportive of the plan to assist small businesses with low or no interest loans following this water emergency. My office stands ready to provide any information or assistance needed to get this bill passed and get our businesses the support they need as quickly and efficiently as possible.

In drafting this legislation, I urge that we include resources for the workers who have been forced to miss shifts as well the businesses that employ them. In traveling around the Kanawha Valley over the past several days, I've heard from a number of employees, who are very concerned about their loss of pay.

It is a great hardship for any working family to go without pay. In particular, many of the employees affected work in minimum wage jobs or at restaurants where they are dependent on tips to make ends meet. These workers simply cannot pay their bills after being forced out of work for four days and counting.

As you know, the Secretary of State's office is on the front lines working with West Virginia small businesses every day. More than 96 percent of West Virginia's economy depends on small businesses, and their success depends on the hard-working West Virginians they employ.

I am eager to see assistance for our small businesses and workers signed into law and begin getting West Virginians the support they need as soon as possible.

Again, my office stands ready to assist in any way.

Sincerely,

Natalie E. Tennant
West Virginia Secretary of State

Building 1, Suite 157-K
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305
(304) 558-6000
www.wvsos.com