

U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION*

The Honorable Mitch McConnell

Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

Speaker of the House of Representatives
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer

Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy

Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Steven Terner Mnuchin

Secretary
U.S. Department of Treasury
Washington, D.C. 20220

May 28, 2020

Dear Secretary Mnuchin, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

Thank you for your efforts to modify the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) so that it works for the small travel businesses and employees who are struggling to survive this economic downturn. We strongly encourage you to make sure that any legislation to amend the PPP also expands the program's eligibility to include Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), which are the economic engines of the travel industry and cannot afford to wait for a broader economic relief bill.

Our country's DMOs, convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs) and state tourism offices are classified as 501(c) nonprofits or quasi-government organizations, which are currently ineligible for the PPP—and most notably the loan forgiveness the program offers—under the CARES Act. They remain ineligible following the most recent PPP funding agreement. As civic-oriented nonprofits, it is even more difficult for them to qualify for other types of SBA loans, denying them the capital they need to keep hard-working American men and women employed—58% of DMOs have had to lay off or furlough some of their staff and 38% of all DMO travel workers are now out of work. Any shuttering of these organizations jeopardizes the very work that will be integral to our nation's recovery efforts.

DMOs, CVBs and state tourism offices are some of the primary drivers of economic benefits in our communities and the entire United States. It is their efforts that drive customers to local small businesses and support local jobs—placing them at the forefront of economic development for communities nationwide. It is their work that will help restore travel, which will power recovery when it is time for our businesses to safely reopen.

The travel industry has been disproportionately harmed by the economic slowdown caused by COVID-19. Travel-related job losses have surpassed 8 million and represent 38% of all jobs lost through April. The unemployment rate in the travel industry is 51%, which is more than twice the highest unemployment rate during the worst year of the Great Depression. This year, travel spending is expected to decline by \$519 billion and cost the economy \$1.2 trillion in economic activity, which is nine times greater than the economic impact following September 11th. Simply put, the travel industry cannot recover from the greatest economic crisis in our lifetimes without the important work of DMOs. DMOs will promote the businesses and attractions that have safely reopened, provide travelers with information about how to travel safely and keep themselves and our communities healthy during their stay.

Unfortunately, DMOs have seen their funding all but dry up due to the crisis, as most rely on hotel or rental car taxes for funding. Unless they can access the payroll and business expense support provided by the PPP, many DMOs will close their doors for good. We know you are working around the clock and we are grateful for your continued support, but it cannot be emphasized enough that allowing 501(c) and quasi-governmental DMOs access to the PPP will have a positive and powerful ripple effect across the entire country. Therefore, we respectfully and urgently request that any legislation to amend the PPP includes expanded eligibility for 501(c) and quasi-governmental DMOs so these organizations can secure the critical relief they need to be in the best position to help rebuild our country.

Signed,

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Katherine Kertzman
President & CEO
Seattle Southside Regional Tourism Authority

Jennifer Wesselhoff
President/CEO
Sedona Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau

Lea Filson
Executive Director
See Plymouth

Bill Chapin
Chairman and CEO
See Rock City, Inc.

Sheryl Smedley
Executive Director
Selma and Dallas County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism
Information

Linda Devlin
Executive Director
Seneca Highlands Association, DBA Allegheny National Forest
Visitors Bureau

Angela Atchley
Tourism Director
Sevier County Tourism Department

Angela Whitcomb
President/CEO
Shakopee Chamber & Visitors Bureau

Mary Childress
Director
Shaner Hotel Group

Rachael R. Ackley
Executive Director
Shelby County Tourism & Visitors Bureau

Donna Price
Director
Sherman County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Caitlin Holland
President
Shoals Chamber of Commerce

Stacy A. Brown
President & CEO
Shreveport-Bossier Convention & Tourist Bureau

Bill Vander Weele
Executive Director
Sidney Chamber of Commerce and Convention Visitors Bureau

Teri Schmidt
Executive Director
Sioux Falls Convention & Visitors Bureau

Earl Magrath
President
Sir Goony Golf of Chattanooga Inc.

Angie Waiss
Executive Director
Skamania County Chamber of Commerce

Nathan Rafferty
President & CEO
Ski Utah

Jim Epperson
Executive Director
SoIN Tourism (Clark-Floyd Counties, Indiana)

Johnny Smith
CEO/President
Songbirds

Claudia Vecchio
President/CEO
Sonoma County Tourism

Tim Zahner
Executive Director
Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau

Stratton Tingle
Executive Director
SoundCorps

Louise Bishop
President
South County Tourism Council

James D. Hagen
Secretary
South Dakota Department of Tourism

Speros A. Batistatos, FCDME
President and Chief Executive Officer
South Shore (IN) Convention & Visitors Authority

Monica Smith
President & CEO
Southeast Tourism Society

Lynda LeVan
Executive Director
Southern Lit Alliance

Sarah Bannon
Executive Director
Southwest Montana

Melissa Arnold
Executive Director
Spencer County Visitors Bureau, Inc.

Scott Dahl
Director
Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau

Kathleen M Ratcliffe
President
St Louis Convention & Visitors Commission

Richard Goldman
President & CEO
St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors &
Convention Bureau

Lora Brown
Executive Director
St. Ignace Visitors Bureau

Becky Davis
Executive Director
Statesboro Convention & Visitors Bureau

Kevin Costello
President
Steuben County Conference and Visitors Bureau

Blair McGary
Executive Director
Summit Chamber of Commerce

Pat Bernshausen
Tourism Coordinator / DMO
Surry County, Virginia

Andrew J. Miller
Executive Director
Susquehanna River Valley Visitors Bureau

Larry S Parks
Chairman, CEO
T U Parks Construction Co.

Gena McPhail
Director of Tourism
Tahlequah Tourism

Karolyn Kirchgesler
Chief Executive Officer
Team San Jose

W Keith Sanford
President and CEO
Tennessee Aquarium

Jim Mejias
Tourism & Media Relations
The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce

Angela Wilson
President/CEO
The Greater Muskogee Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism

Fritz Smith
President & CEO
The Happy Valley (PA) Adventure Bureau

Jules Downum
Director
The Pop-up Project

Brian McCartin
President & CEO
The Tempe Tourism Office

Rebecca Maffei
Director
Tioga County Tourism

Larisa Draves
Administrator
Tourism Industry Coalition of MI

Paulette Lombardi-Fries
President
Travel Costa Mesa

Kari Westlund
President & CEO
Travel Lane County

Susan Estler
Executive Director
Travel Marquette

Danna Stroud
Executive Director
Travel Paso

Jeff Miller
President and CEO
Travel Portland

Liz Bittner
President & CEO
Travel South USA

Dean Burke
President & CEO
Travel Tacoma - Mt. Rainier; Tourism & Sports

Trevor Tkach
President / CEO
Traverse City Tourism

Jessica Waldo
Executive Director
Tucker County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Laura Meadows
Executive Director
Upshur County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Roger Dow
President and CEO
U.S. Travel Association

Mike Bowman
President
Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board

Maryl Purvis
Director
Van Buren A&P Commission

Brian Tucker
Executive Director
Ventura County Lodging Association

John R. Crook
Executive Director
Vernon Parish Tourism Commission

Laura Beth Strickland
Executive Director
Vicksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau

Shyla Beam
Executive Director
Vincennes/Knox County VTB

Rita McClenny
CEO
Virginia Tourism Corporation

Mitch Patel
President & CEO
Vision Hospitality Group, Inc.

Tania Armenta
President & CEO
Visit Albuquerque

Jay Burress
CEO
Visit Anaheim

Julie Saupe
President & CEO
Visit Anchorage

Pam Crain
Director
VISIT Ark City

Bruce Dalton
President/CEO
Visit Aurora, CO

Tom Noonan
President/CEO
Visit Austin

Al Hutchinson
President and CEO
Visit Baltimore

Susan M. Smith
CEO
Visit Bastrop

Paul Arrigo
President/CEO
Visit Baton Rouge

Brad M. Jones
Executive Director
Visit Bellevue WA

Kalene Griffith
President
Visit Bentonville and Bentonville Advertising and Promotion
Commission

Barbara Hillman
President & CEO
Visit Berkeley

Michael Perry
Interim CEO
Visit Big Bear

Candace Carr Strauss
CEO
Visit Big Sky
Alex Tyson
Executive Director
Visit Billings (Montana)

Judi Hess
Director
Visit Binghamton

Michael McAfee
Executive Director
Visit Bloomington

Katie Goenner
President
Visit Brainerd

Sara Copping
Executive Director
Visit Buena Park

Patrick Kaler
President & CEO
Visit Buffalo Niagara

David Peterson
Executive Director
Visit Carson City

Jayne DeLuce
President & CEO
Visit Champaign County

Amanda Wilkin
Executive Director
Visit Charlevoix

Josiah Jones
Executive Director
Visit Clearfield County

Samantha Kudrick
Tourism Director
Visit Coffeyville

Doug Price
President & CEO
Visit Colorado Springs

Peter F. Bowden
President & CEO
Visit Columbus GA

Nancy Luke Carpenter
CEO
Visit Columbus Mississippi

Elaine Schroth
President & CEO
Visit Concord CA

Christy Burns
Executive Director
Visit Corinth

Christina Rehlau
Executive Director
Visit Corvallis

Jonny Westom
President
Visit Dana Point

Stephen Byrne
Executive Director
Visit Delco, PA

Richard W. Scharf
President & CEO
VISIT DENVER

Aaron McCreight
President & CEO
Visit Dothan

Kevin Manley
Executive Director
Visit Dubois County

Anna Tanski
President/CEO
Visit Duluth

Theresa Blake Graven
Tourism & Communications Director
Visit Durango Colorado

Jennifer Seaton
Director
Visit Edmond

James T. Wood
President & CEO
Visit Evansville

Barry H. Biggar, CDME
President/CEO
Visit Fairfax

Stephanie Busiahn
Executive Director
Visit Fairmont, Minnesota

Joe Gagliardi
CEO/President
Visit Folsom

Cynthia Eichler
President and CEO
Visit Fort Collins

Robert L Jameson
President and CEO
Visit Fort Worth

Ellie Westman Chin
President & CEO
Visit Franklin, TN

John Fieseler
Executive Director
Visit Frederick

Kristal Painter
Executive Director
Visit French Lick West Baden

Jane Howard
Executive Director
Visit Gilroy

Elizabeth Fogarty
Director
Visit Grand Junction

Lisa Langer
Director of Tourism Promotion
Visit Glenwood Springs

Andrew Schmidt
President and CEO
Visit Greenville NC

Jennifer Stilwell
Executive Vice President
Visit Greenville SC

Brenda Myers
President / CEO
Visit Hamilton County

Marlo Dorsey
Executive Director
Visit Hattiesburg

Mary Smith
President & CEO
Visit Hershey & Harrisburg

Ashley Huckaby May
Director
Visit Hood River

Amanda Hof
Executive Director
Visit Howard County, Maryland

Kelly Miller
President & CEO
Visit Huntington Beach

Beth Javens
Executive Director
Visit Issaquah

Rickey L. Thigpen
President & CEO
Visit Jackson

Lisa M. Rager
Executive Director
Visit Johnstown (PA)

Jason Fulvi
President & CEO
Visit KC

Jo Wade
President/CEO
Visit Lafayette-West Lafayette

Ashley Johnson, CDME
President & CEO
Visit Laguna Beach

Kyle Edmiston
President/CEO
Visit Lake Charles

Maureen Riedy
President
Visit Lake County

Janet Falotico
Executive Director
Visit Lawrence County

Justin Gifford
Executive Director
Visit Lenawee

Michelle Peters
President/CEO
Visit Lewis Clark Valley

Nancy Rezac
Executive Director
Visit Longmont

Theodore B. Wampole, Jr
Executive Director
Visit Luzerne County

Gary Wheat
President/CEO
Visit Macon, Inc.

Tawana Thomas
Executive Director
Visit Madison

Cassi Weiss
Director
Visit Marshall

Jaki Berggren
Executive Director
Visit McHenry County

Jamie Null
Director
Visit Mercer County CVB

Peggy Mazyck
President/CEO
Visit Mercer County PA

Marc J. Garcia
President and CEO
Visit Mesa

Peggy Williams-Smith
President and CEO
VISIT Milwaukee

David Clark
President & CEO
Visit Mobile

Heather Shirk
Executive Director
Visit Montgomery County Indiana

Kelly Groff, CDME
President & CEO
Visit Montgomery MD

Krista Rupp
Executive Director
Visit Morgan Hill

Robert M. Lukens
Director
Visit Muskegon

Linsey Gallagher
President & CEO
Visit Napa Valley

Gary Sherwin
President & Chief Executive Officer
Visit Newport Beach

Wit Tuttell
Director
Visit North Carolina

Eric C. Wagner
President & CEO
Visit Oak Park

Mark Everton
CEO
Visit Oakland

Leslee Gaul
CEO
Visit Oceanside

Sara Toliver
President & CEO
Visit Ogden

Keith Backsen
Executive Director
Visit Omaha

George Aguel
President & CEO
Visit Orlando

Jeanne Goldschmidt
Executive Director
Visit Pasadena

Darien Schaefer
President & CEO
Visit Pensacola

Jeff Guaracino
President & CEO
VISIT PHILADELPHIA

Steve Moore
President/CEO
Visit Phoenix

Kari Mobley
Executive Director
Visit Posey County, Inc.

Colleen Hanson
Executive Director
Visit Potter-Tioga

Dave Herrell
President and CEO
Visit Quad Cities

Don Jeffries
President & CEO
Visit Rochester

J. R. Shaw
Executive Director
Visit Rogers

Andy Williams
Executive Director
Visit Roswell, Georgia

Mike Testa
Chief Executive Officer
Visit Sacramento

Terry Mattson
President & CEO
Visit Saint Paul

Casandra Matej
President & CEO
Visit San Antonio

Kathy Janega-Dykes
President & CEO
Visit Santa Barbara

Margaret Ivy
CEO
Visit Santa Cruz County

Misti Kerns
President & CEO
Visit Santa Monica

Brad Calkins
Executive Director
Visit Santa Rosa

Shelby Sim
President / CEO
Visit Santa Ynez Valley

Virginia J. Haley
President
Visit Sarasota County

Joseph Marinelli
President
Visit Savannah

Tom Norwalk
President & CEO
Visit Seattle

Chuck Davison
President & CEO
Visit SLO CAL

Rob DeCleene
Executive Director
Visit South Bend Mishawaka

Brenda Maas
Executive Marketing Director
Visit Southeast Montana

Lisa Strader
Executive Director
Visit Southern WV

Meg Winchester
President & CEO
Visit Spokane

Steve Hayes
President & CEO
Visit St. Pete/Clearwater

Cristy Morrison
President & CEO
Visit Stillwater

Wes Rhea
CEO
Visit Stockton

Danny Liedka
President & CEO
Visit Syracuse

Santiago C. Corrada
President/CEO
Visit Tampa Bay

Kimberly Adams
President & CEO
Visit Temecula Valley

Nick Wolda
President
Visit The Woodlands

Michael Novakovich
President & CEO
Visit Tri-Cities

Tracy Farhad
President & CEO
Visit Tri-Valley

Brent DeRaad
President & CEO
Visit Tucson

Michael Browne
President & CEO
Visit Vallejo CA

Cliff Myers
President & CEO
Visit Vancouver USA

Marlyss Auster
President/CEO
Visit Ventura

Landon C. Howard
President
Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge

Christine Flohr
Executive Director
Visit Wabash County

Daylan Gibbard
Director
Visit Walla Walla

Tom Kiely
President & CEO
Visit West Hollywood

Susie Santo
President and CEO
Visit Wichita

Vicki Cimino
Chief Executive Officer
Visit Williamsburg

Pat Mutter
Executive Director
Visit Winona

Rhonda Salisbury
CEO
Visit Yosemite | Madera County

John Oliver
President/CEO
VisitErie

Mary Quinn Ramer
President
VisitLEX

David Blandford and Shiloh Burgess
Co-Chairs
Washington Tourism Alliance

Phillip S. Smith
President & CEO
Warren County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Wright Tilley
Executive Director
Watauga County Tourism Development Authority

Christine Worth
Director
Wayne County Tourism

Valerie Earl
Executive Director
Wellington Area Chamber of Commerce/CVB

Summer Rose
Operations Coordinator
West Columbia Gorge Chamber & Visitor Center

Georgia Turner
Executive Director
West Volusia Tourism

Charyl Reardon
President
White Mountains Recreation Association

Dylan Boyle
Executive Director
Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau (Explore Whitefish)

Beth Fischer
Executive Director
Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Sarah Werner
CEO
Winfield Area Chamber of Commerce/Winfield Convention and Tourism

John Cooper
President & CEO
Yakima Valley Tourism

Mary Vilbon
Executive Director
Yarmouth Chamber of Commerce

Jessica L. Bacher
President and CEO
Yates County Chamber of Commerce

Robin Hoover
Executive Director
Yellowstone Country Montana, Inc.

Jonathan Farrington
Executive Director/CEO
Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau

Linda Morgan
Executive Director
Yuma Visitors Bureau

Identical Letter Sent to:

The Honorable Marco Rubio
The Honorable Ben Cardin
The Honorable Nydia Velazquez
The Honorable Steve Chabot