

April 20, 2020

Honorable Name
Member of Congress
Address
City State Zip

Dear Congressman:

As leaders of Illinois' major business associations, we believe that the health, welfare, and safety of Illinois residents and the American people are paramount during this unprecedented global pandemic. We are committed to doing our part to help "flatten the curve" while supporting our members and engaging with elected officials about key policy decisions.

On behalf of our Associations, first accept our sincere appreciation for your leadership and dedication during this public health emergency. We appreciate the recent Congressional action that begins to address the impact of COVID-19 and provide relief to employers and workers across Illinois.

While we appreciate 501(c)(6) organizations can indeed access certain aid through an employee retention tax credit (Section 2301) and the Small Business Administration is accepting applications from 501(c)(6) organizations for expanded Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL: Section 1110), these trade associations **were not included** in the Paycheck Protection Program of the CARES Act.

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Illinois is home to nearly 2,000 membership organizations that employ 47,000 women and men across the entire state. Chicago is our nation's second largest association community. Combined, Illinois associations control more than \$8 billion in meetings and convention expenditures. We represent thousands of companies that employ millions of people in Illinois.

Much like the business and nonprofit communities, Association have been confronted with significant financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. Many associations will struggle financially because member companies cannot afford to pay dues when they are trying to make payroll. Our teams are working around the clock to help businesses navigate the landscape and answer questions while serving as a liaison to our state and federal officials. Associations have been forced to cancel paid events during this crisis while often replacing them with free webinars and conference calls to help educate the industry. Our member- benefits programs such as merchant services, shipping programs, and credit card processing services are providing little to no revenue as a result of the economic shutdown. Simply put, Association revenue streams have been cut off.

In the course of one month, our members have gone from seeing more than a decade of revenue growth to a reality of closing their doors. Our associations are no different. If we do not receive financial assistance during these unprecedented times, all will be negatively impacted and many could go out of

business. This will further impact the critical services that we provide to Illinois employers and our employees.

Associations play a critical role in ensuring compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. We serve as a resource to answer countless questions from our memberships and we pride ourselves in being a valuable source of information for the Illinois business community and for our elected officials at all levels of government.

As such, we respectfully ask that 501(c)(6) associations be included in future relief measures under consideration in Congress. Our collective organizations have, and will continue, to suffer financial losses as a direct result of COVID-19. As employers in Illinois, we request the same financial assistance that is rightfully being provided to the business and nonprofit community.

Thank you in advance for your strong consideration.

Sincerely,

501(c)(6) Coalition