



March 20, 2020

Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

As united representatives of the large and diverse American entertainment community, we offer our sincere gratitude for your immense efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide much needed aid.

We understand the sacrifices our country is making and appreciate our shared responsibility. We will make the necessary adjustments to our lives but, unfortunately, there is no option for many in the entertainment community to work from home. Our home is on the road, on the studio lot or in the theater, in venues across the country that must close during the pandemic, in front of live audiences or with cast members who cannot gather. For now, those performances – and our jobs – have vanished, along with the costly and personally devastating investments we can never recover. Without help, we know that many in our community will find themselves homeless, hungry, and unable to tend to their medical needs.

The economic pain cuts even deeper, touching not only performers and musicians, but also managers, producers, promoters, stagehands, drivers, and countless others who are feeling the immediate repercussions of this new reality. This unprecedented economic loss caused by canceled performances and production shutdowns is being played out in bars, nightclubs, theaters, stadiums, concert halls, studios, and festivals in every state, sidelining thousands of workers.

The entertainment community will do what it can to support its members, but this moment calls for the unmatched capabilities of Congress. As you navigate the difficult path to providing necessary aid to distinct sectors of our economy, we ask that you specifically address the unique nature of our work. Payroll tax holidays, paid leave, and other typical assistance may never reach many in the entertainment community; in fact, direct financial aid remains one hopeful – and perhaps best - solution to replacing lost income and offering some semblance of economic sustainability.

We propose a similar benefit to the Emergency Paid Leave in Division C of HR 6201, along with emergency unemployment insurance access, available to those who cannot work due to a canceled performance or a production shut down. This fund and expanded unemployment insurance access and benefits would ensure that hundreds of thousands of families across the country can continue to pay rent, put food on the table, and care for their children during this public health emergency. In addition, we encourage you to be as inclusive as possible when crafting emergency paid leave, tax credits, and other programs – the unique nature of our industry means rules that require beneficiaries to have had a single, long-term employer will simply leave our entire workforce behind.

We all look forward to the end of this crisis. Certainly, entertainment will help us get through it. But we must take care of the many people in the American entertainment community who will help us heal, rebuild, and bring us back together, in public and in spirit.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Actors' Equity

Alliance for Recorded Music (ARM)

American Association of Independent Music (A2IM)

American Federation of Musicians (AFM)

Americana Music Association

Artist Rights Alliance (ARA)

ASCAP

The Azoff Company

The Broadway League

California IATSE Council

Christian Music Trade Association (CMTA)

Church Music Publishers Association (CMPA)

Country Music Association (CMA)

Gospel Music Association (GMA)

CreativeFuture

Creative Artists Agency (CAA)

Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE)

Digital Media Association (DiMA)

Directors Guild of America (DGA)

Entertainment Union Coalition

Full Stop Management

Global Music Rights (GMR)

Gospel Music Association

Independent Music Professionals United (IMPU)

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE)

International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA)

Live Nation

Music Artists Coalition (MAC)

Music Business Association (MusicBiz)

Music Managers Forum – US

Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI)

National Music Publishers' Association (NMPA)

On Board Experiential

Paradigm Talent Agency

Recording Academy

Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA)

Screen Actors Guild – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA)

SESAC

Songwriters of North America (SONA)

SoundExchange

Southern Gospel Music Guild

United Talent Agency (UTA)

William Morris Endeavor (WME)

Writers' Guild of America, East