

# #DONOTABANDONUS



SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Dear Senators and Members of the House of Representatives,

We represent the large community of independent businesses and workers that have been economically devastated by the pandemic. We write to express our dire need for assistance, and to urge you to move quickly to pass additional COVID relief. Absent a deal by the end of September, our businesses will disappear, millions of Americans will permanently lose their jobs, and entire industries will take decades to recover, if they do at all.

We are entrepreneurs, freelancers, entertainers, and workers that represent the best of American creativity and innovation. We are incubators for community development, driving investment in local economies, generating a strong tax base, and providing tens of millions of jobs across the country. America's businesses are shuttering by the thousands and its workers are struggling with basic expenses. According to Yelp, more than 163,000 businesses have already closed, 60% permanently, and that number rises daily. 22 million jobs have been lost due to the pandemic and less than half have been recovered. The National Bureau of Economic Research estimates that 42% of recent layoffs will be permanent losses. Without swift action by Congress, the businesses that sustain families will evaporate, and millions of people will be left utterly stranded. There won't be other options for us. This would have a devastating ripple effect across all industries.

You must act NOW. Please do not abandon us. We cannot wait for more assistance. The performance of the stock market doesn't reflect the reality that many of our businesses and workers are on the brink of bankruptcy. State reopening plans have left us behind. The unique nature of our businesses means that we are still either completely shuttered or can only operate with severely restricted capacity. Our statistics are extremely troubling: 95% of live events have been canceled; other businesses have lost upwards of 75% of our revenue because we closed for the sake of public health and to prevent further spread of COVID-19, but we have not been made whole.

To help see us through this crisis, we need Congress to come together on a deal that provides robust economic assistance for the hardest-hit businesses and extends enhanced pandemic unemployment compensation and assistance into 2021. There are solutions on the table that carry wide bipartisan support and would ensure we can keep our doors open. We urge you to press Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and others in leadership to bring these plans to a vote. Absent such assistance, we will be left with no alternatives other than widespread business closures, the permanent elimination of millions of jobs, and the loss of cherished American experiences. We are in this position from no fault of our own. This would be irreparable damage to the social, cultural, and economic life of our communities. Congress should focus on a solution that addresses the severity of this crisis. Please do not abandon us.

Thank you for your consideration of our needs at this challenging time.

Sincerely,

ExtendPUA.org • International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association • League of Historic American Theatres  
Live Events Coalition • The Main Street Alliance • National Association of Theatre Owners • National Independent Talent Organization  
National Independent Venue Association