

Please visit <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials> to easily get contact information for your elected officials. Calls are best, but you may also use this suggested letter below.

Finally, please share this request with everyone you know. Thank you!

## **LETTER TO ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Dear XXXX,

I am writing about an urgent matter involving the Live Event Industry. Due to Covid-19, concerts, sporting events, trade shows, conferences, theatrical productions, and countless others have been cancelled by the thousands. Layoffs have already begun and will be staggering.

Unlike other industries, ours will not come back “overnight.” Why? If the virus leads to a recession, live events and travel are historically one of the first in. The pain will continue. In addition, these events will take months to re-plan and reschedule. So even when the virus passes, the Live Event Industry will remain devastated for months, if not years.

The meetings industry in the U.S. represents \$845 billion of business sales annually and employs 5.9 million jobs worth \$249 billion of labor income. We contribute \$104 billion of federal, state and local taxes. The meetings sector supports more direct jobs than many large manufacturing sectors, including machinery, food, auto, chemicals, telecommunications and oil and gas extraction industries. (*source: Meetings Mean Business / Economic Significance of Meetings to the US Economy Events Industry Council*).

A COVID-19 Live Events Industry Impact Study was conducted by Elite Core Audio over March 11-15, 2020. Over 1,000 event professionals responded. The results are sobering and represent only a small fraction of our industry right now. (<https://elitecoreaudio.com/covid-19-impact-study>) The average American live event production company has already lost \$157,573, which is 18% of their average expected annual revenue. Considering there are 78,000 of these companies nationwide, the total loss in the short term is expected to be well over \$12 billion. Should the cancellations continue, this number will multiply quickly.

- Average of 12 events cancelled per respondent
- Freelancers report an average loss of 37% of their expected annual income from events already cancelled
- 91% of all entities are being forced to take major responsive actions
- 49% of companies anticipate facing layoffs
  - On average, 84% of all contract labor getting laid off
  - On average, 53% of full-time workforce getting laid off
- 43% of companies are anticipating the need to liquidate assets
- 29% of companies are anticipating facing bankruptcy or closing operations

The federal aid packages currently being proposed will not help most Americans in the Live Event Industry. As small, independent businesses, we cannot apply for unemployment, sick days or get work furloughed. In addition, approximately 55% - 75% of our workforce is freelance/contract labor.

Like cruise lines, airlines, and hotels, individual live event contractors and small business/suppliers need help now. We need financial relief and clear understanding of responsibility for canceled contracts when events cancel due to pandemic and non-force majeure. The change.org petition for aid to the Live Events Industry outlines specific asks for assistance and has received nearly 250,000 signatures as of March 17th. The asks are included in the list below.

#### Small Businesses in the Live Events Industry Need

1. \$100 Billion in employee retention grants directly to business owners. Low interest loans and tax cuts will *not* stop these widespread layoffs. Americans have been prohibited from holding large gatherings. As a service-based industry, we cannot take on enough debt to support our employees without the ability to generate revenue.
2. Emergency health insurance to cover uninsured owners, our contractors and laid off employees
3. An additional \$200 Billion in low interest federally backed business liquidity loans to rebuild.
4. The ability to submit canceled contracts as loss of income on our 2020 taxes.

#### Employees and Independent Contractors in the Live Event Industry Need

1. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act to include 1099 self-employed individuals
2. The ability to apply for unemployment insurance to cover lost income.
3. The ability to get disability sick pay for missed work.

I urge you to sponsor and support legislation that addresses the crisis in our industry. Our situation is dire.

I look forward to hearing from you.

NAME  
COMPANY  
ADDRESS  
PHONE  
EMAIL