

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 27, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Chairman
Senate Committee on Small Business
and Entrepreneurship

The Honorable Ben Cardin
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Small
Business and Entrepreneurship

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Rubio, and Ranking Member Cardin:

With your leadership, Congress passed the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* (P.L. 116-136) to create the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a powerful program to support small businesses and some non-profits as they deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we have concerns that PPP's eligibility criteria have shut out some worthy non-profits that are listed under section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code.

We've heard from many 501(c)(6)s that have been impacted by COVID-19 and are concerned that they will be unable to carry out their missions. Many 501(c)(6)s are struggling because of significant declines or uncertainty in their membership dues resulting from COVID-19, and many have had to cancel major events that they rely on for funding. We're hopeful that as you consider modifications to the PPP, you will expand the program to include 501(c)(6) non-profits that do not engage in substantial federal campaign or lobbying activities and can demonstrate economic hardship.

501(c)(6) organizations include regional chambers of commerce, tourism and hospitality associations, medical associations, certified public accountant societies, state legal societies, state restaurant associations, groups representing law enforcement, among many others. Many of these 501(c)(6) organizations are filling an essential role on the front lines of our nation's COVID-19 response, providing their members with services and guidance necessary to help them through this challenging time.

The Commonwealth of Virginia has a significant number of 501(c)(6) organizations and Virginians employed by them. According to some estimates, Virginia has the third most 501(c)(6) employees in the country. We're proud of the work these Virginians do to support their communities and local businesses and do not believe they should be excluded from the PPP, which might be the deciding factor in whether their organization can keep its doors open.

Throughout this pandemic, Congress has recognized that a whole of society effort is needed to combat COVID-19 and to mitigate its devastating economic impacts. Local chambers, for example, have been valuable partners in helping small business owners get up-to-date information about the assistance programs passed under the *CARES Act*. Law enforcement associations here in Virginia have provided vital information and training for their members related to COVID-19 as they keep our fellow citizens safe. Education associations have supported teachers and school leaders with webinars and other professional development resources as they abruptly transitioned to serving students through remote instruction.

Thank you for taking this important consideration into account as you work to help our economy and communities cope with the economic impacts of COVID-19. We look forward to continuing our work together as we pursue bipartisan approaches to managing and overcoming this crisis.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator