

[April XX], 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker
United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer, Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Leader
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Thank you for your leadership and continued work to protect Americans, stabilize the economy, and ensure the survival of key institutions and sectors during this challenging time. We represent a group of [XX] chambers of commerce from [XX] states working with employers and businesses of all sizes and industries to respond to our national public health and economic crisis.

The 2020 CARES Act and the new American Rescue Plan Act provided much-needed relief to many of our members, however, there are critical gaps in the aid that fail to meet the needs of the creative and cultural economy. A report from the Brookings Institution¹ found that the country's 670,000 creative economy businesses have collectively lost at least \$150 billion, and that over half of all workers in the creative sector remain unemployed. Johns Hopkins University and the international Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development warn² that the creative sector is among the most impacted industries in the country—with damaging ripple effects to restaurants, tourism, travel, and local businesses. Bureau of Economic Analysis data shows that the sector contracted by 57% between the end of 2019 and mid-2020—twice the rate of other highly impacted industries—and is rebounding at a slower rate.³

We request that the U.S. Congress work swiftly to enact the following provisions within the infrastructure and recovery package. These proposals echo the Put Creative Workers to Work policy platform endorsed by over 2,300 creative businesses and creative workers in all 50 states.⁴

¹ Source: Brookings Institution, [Lost Art](#), 2020

² Source: [Johns Hopkins University](#) and [Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development](#)

³ Source: [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis](#), 2020

⁴ <http://www.creativeworkers.net>

- Allocate \$14 billion to incentivize local, state, and tribal businesses and governments to put creative workers to work, including hiring or tax credits to incentivize businesses and local and state agencies to accelerate hiring, re-hiring, or retention of creative workers; funds to incentivize financial institutions to invest in small creative businesses and creative entrepreneurs; grants to cover restart costs for small creative businesses and provide capital for the creation of new creative product to be sold; and support for local and state creative workforce programs.
- Allocate \$3 billion to spark an American cultural renaissance via the NEA, NEH, IMLS, and other federal agencies, including through creative jobs, fellowships, residencies, and commissions designed to drive local economic growth and community cohesion, produce free entertainment to encourage local spending, and incentivize local and state workforce development programs.
- Allocate \$1 billion in arts and creativity-based education for recovery via the Department of Education, including a bridge program to incentivize retention of arts educators.
- Direct the Federal Reserve to broaden their nonprofit lending facility under the Main Street Lending Program to specifically benefit mid-size nonprofits to those with more than 500 employees, and a loan forgiveness option.

As we face the road to economic recovery, we must prioritize the sector of creative and cultural institutions, particularly because they will help drive the recovery of local small businesses and economies of all types. With key investments and funding, cultural institutions can push the recovery forward across the country.

Sincerely,

CHAMBERS WILL BE LISTED HERE