

April 26, 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 **113 chambers of commerce from 46 states** collectively working with **over 33 million employers, employees, 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 economy and cultural infrastructure. A report from the Brookings Institution¹ found that the country's 670,000 creative economy businesses (which generate \$919.7 billion each year towards the GDP)² 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 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development warn³ 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 59% between the end of 2019 and mid-2020—twice the rate of other highly impacted industries—and is rebounding at a slower rate.⁴

We request that the U.S. Congress work swiftly to enact the following provisions within the infrastructure and recovery package known as the American Jobs Plan. 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.⁵

- Allocate \$14 billion to incentivize local, state, and tribal businesses and governments to put creative workers to work and activate cultural infrastructure, 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

¹ Source: Brookings Institution, *Lost Art*, 2020

² Source: [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis](#), 2020

³ Source: [Johns Hopkins University and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#)

⁴ Source: [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis](#), 2020

⁵ Visit <http://www.creativeworkers.net>

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 and infrastructure 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 within education infrastructure.
- 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 creative infrastructure and 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,

Alabama

Mobile Area Chamber, Mobile, AL

Arkansas

Greater Bentonville Area Chamber of Commerce, Bentonville, AR

Arizona

Visit Tucson, Tucson, AZ

California

Los Angeles Area Chamber, Los Angeles, CA

Orange County Business Council, Orange County, CA

Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce, Pacific Grove, CA

Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, Santa Monica, CA

Colorado

Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Aurora, CO

Boulder Chamber of Commerce, Boulder, CO

Crested Butte Chamber of Commerce, Crested Butte, CO

Connecticut

Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce, Bristol, CT

Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce, Norwalk, CT

MetroHartford Alliance, Hartford, CT

Florida

AMPLIFY Clearwater, Clearwater, FL
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, Miami, FL
Lakeland Chamber of Commerce, Lakeland, FL

Georgia

Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Atlanta, GA

Hawaii

Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI

Idaho

Boise Metro Chamber, Boise, ID

Illinois

Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Joliet, IL
Oak Lawn Chamber of Commerce, Chicago, IL
Oak Park - River Forest Chamber of Commerce, Oak Park, IL
The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Springfield, IL

Indiana

Indy Chamber, Indianapolis, IN
Southwest Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Evansville, IN

Iowa

DuBuque Area Chamber of Commerce, DuBuque, IA
Iowa City Area Business Partnership, Iowa City, IA

Kansas

Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, Salina, KS

Kentucky

Greater Louisville Inc., Louisville, KY

Louisiana

Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, Shreveport, LA

Maryland

Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce, Gaithersburg, MD

Massachusetts

Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, Cape Cod, MA
Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Boston, MA
Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce, Acton, MA
Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce, Littleton, MA
Springfield Regional Chamber of Commerce, Springfield, MA
Stoneham Chamber of Commerce, Stoneham, MA
Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, Worcester, MA

Michigan

Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Regional Chamber, Ann Arbor, MI
Detroit Regional Chamber, Detroit, MI
Flint & Genesee Group, Flint, MI
Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce, Saginaw, MI

Minnesota

Minneapolis Regional Chamber, Minneapolis, MN
St. Paul Area Chamber, St. Paul, MN

Mississippi

Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Gulfport, MS

Missouri

Greater St. Louis, Inc., St. Louis, MO

Montana

Billings Chamber of Commerce, Billings, MT

Nebraska

Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce, Kearney, NE

Nevada

Carson City Chamber of Commerce, Carson City, NV
Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce, Reno, NV
Urban Chamber of Commerce, Las Vegas, NV

New Hampshire

Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, Concord, NH
Greater Manchester Chamber, Manchester, NH

New Jersey

Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey, Voorhees, NJ
Greater Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce, Elizabeth, NJ
Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce & Convention & Visitors Bureau, New Brunswick, NJ
Phillipsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Phillipsburg, NJ
Princeton Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce, Princeton, NJ
Somerset County Business Partnership, Bridgewater, NJ
Southern Ocean County Chamber of Commerce, Long Beach Island Region, NJ

New York

Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce, Ithaca, NY
Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, Brooklyn, NY
Capital Region Chamber, Albany, NY
Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce, Rochester, NY

North Carolina

Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, Boone, NC
Carolina Foothills Chamber of Commerce, Tryon, NC
Carteret County Chamber of Commerce, Morehead City, NC
Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, Greensboro, NC
Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, Raleigh, NC
The Chamber, Leading Business in Cabarrus, Concord, NC
Tyrrell County Chamber of Commerce, Columbia, NC
Wake Forest Area Chamber of Commerce, Wake Forest, NC

Ohio

Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, Cincinnati, OH

Oklahoma

Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, Oklahoma City, OK

Oregon

Portland Business Alliance, Portland, OR

Pennsylvania

Allentown Chamber of Commerce, Allentown, PA
Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce, Bethlehem, PA
East Penn Area Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley, PA
Easton Area Chamber of Commerce, Easton, PA
Emmaus Main Street Partners, Emmaus, PA
Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership, Erie, PA
Greater Bath Area Chamber of Commerce, Bath, PA
Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley, PA
Greater Northern Lehigh Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley, PA
Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, Pittsburgh, PA
Hellertown-Lower Saucon Chamber of Commerce, Hellertown, PA
Nazareth Business Council, Nazareth, PA
Northampton Area Chamber of Commerce, Northampton, PA
Southern Lehigh Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley, PA
Western Lehigh Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley, PA

Rhode Island

Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce, Newport, RI
Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Providence, RI

South Carolina

Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, North Charleston, SC
Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, Columbia, SC
Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce, Hilton Head, SC

Tennessee

Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce, Chattanooga, TN

Texas

Greater Houston Partnership, Houston, TX
McAllen Chamber of Commerce, McAllen, TX
Rio Grande Valley Partnership, Weslaco, TX
San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, San Antonio, TX

Utah

Cache Valley Chamber of Commerce, Logan, UT

Virginia

ChamberRVA, Richmond, VA
Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Tysons, VA
Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce, Mount Vernon, VA

Washington

Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Seattle, WA
Thurston County Chamber, Olympia, WA

West Virginia

Huntington Regional Chamber of Commerce, Huntington, WV
West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Charleston, WV

Wisconsin

Envision Greater Fond du Lac, Fond du Lac, WI
Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce, Appleton, WI
Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, Madison, WI

Wyoming

Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, Cheyenne, WY