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January 15, 2021

Re: Economic Relief For Small Businesses 2021

Dear Federal, State, and Local Leaders,

As the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing economic crisis continues, our local San Francisco community of residents, employees, and employers continues to struggle. The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and our community partners urge our federal, state, and local elected leaders to act immediately to develop continued relief strategies for businesses and employees. **To support the survival of our small business community as we work towards recovery, we urge the federal government and President Elect Biden's administration to immediately implement additional support for small businesses in the form of direct financial relief.**

On a local and state level, we appreciate the grants, permit and business fee waivers, and announcements like the Governor's Equitable Recovery for California Businesses and Jobs. However, our businesses and their employees need more to survive. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent health orders, businesses and members of the community thought there would be several weeks of disruption and planned accordingly. Just weeks into the initial economic disruption, congress was able to pass the CARES Act which provided meaningful support to small businesses and direct stimulus to adversely impacted residents.

The new aid package passed in December and the new round of PPP loans will support businesses which have been operating in the red to keep their doors open and support employees. Unfortunately, the initial critical relief from the CARES Act was followed by months without any implemented expansion. This lapse cost our communities thousands of small businesses along with the jobs they created. Nearly half of all US employees work for small businesses, and national numbers are still hovering around 800,000 new unemployment claims weekly. In order to be able to plan for the future, small businesses need federal relief.

The expansion of PPP loans after four months of continued economic shutdowns has left our small businesses with fleeting short-term support. Aid from the package in December only covers payroll costs for around three and a half months. This is not enough. Our remaining businesses remain in a position of severe fiscal hardship.

Upon the swearing in of our new President and Vice President, we urge our federal government to immediately act to save our small businesses and implement the American Rescue Plan in full. We can no longer offer short term relief. PPP loans will run out before we enter a full recovery, and even a few months without direct relief will decimate small businesses who are hanging on by a thread.



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Small businesses need additional federal economic relief in order to mitigate cash flow shortfalls so they can remain viable until some sense of stability is restored to our public health and economic situation.

Specifically, we urge the federal government to provide cash flow options for businesses struggling with payroll and rent in the form of low-interest small business loans, expanded grants, or through a temporary unemployment insurance expansion and utility payment extensions.

Our government leaders must continue to act swiftly and decisively in order to stabilize the long term economic environment for all. The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and our partners look forward to working with our local, state and federal leaders to tailor solutions for the community as the situation evolves.

Sincerely,

Rodney Fong

San Francisco Chamber of Commerce

Ben Bleiman

California Music & Culture Association

San Francisco Bar Owner Alliance

Owner, Tonic, Soda Popinski, Teeth, Tonic Nightlife Group

Laurie Thomas

Golden Gate Restaurant Association

Kevin Carroll

Hotel Council of San Francisco

Maryo Mogannam

San Francisco Council of District Merchants Associations

Joe D'Alessandro

San Francisco Travel Association

Sharky Laguana

Small Business Leader

President, American Car Rental Association

Matthew Ajiaka

San Francisco African-American Chamber of Commerce

cc: San Francisco Board of Supervisors; Mayor London Breed; State Senator Scott Wiener; State Assemblymember David Chiu; State Assemblymember Phil Ting; Governor Gavin Newsom; Speaker Nancy Pelosi; Senator Alex Padilla; Congressmember Jackie Speier; Senator Dianne Feinstein; Vice President Kamala Harris