

SAMPLE LETTER FOR US TO SEND TO OUR MP/MPP

Dear Senator (or Representative)

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As Congress considers additional legislation to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on economic recovery and stimulus, it is imperative that the legislation ensures that not-for-profit fair organizations and their for profit partners are eligible to participate, not unlike airlines, cruise lines, hotels or others in the travel or hospitality industry sectors. In fact, it may take some very directed language to create critical support for our unique organizations and the functions they perform.

Government announcements mandating travel restrictions, curfews, limitations on crowd sizes and closing of certain events have forced cancellations of all fairs across the country through at least May 30 with the threat of through August.

Largely descendent from activities to promote and support agricultural communities or the celebration of ethnic heritage transplanted to our country, there are almost 2100 local, county, regional or state fairs conducted in the U.S every year. Almost all of these fairs are not-for-profit organizations (some, like in California, are agencies of state government).

Usually each fair organization conducts one major featured fair each year and then rents out their facilities for other shows, concerts, races and expositions. The main fair may last only three days or up to seventeen days. Each fair takes a year of planning and coordination to be successful. Rescheduling is virtually impossible given the schedule of all the exhibitors, vendors, midway operations, and performers, and the schedules of other fairs.

According to the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE), those 2092 U.S fairs generate revenues of \$4.67 billion each year. Of IAFE member fairs, about 95% had a carnival midway as part of their annual main event. Each carnival operation generally is at a given fair for less than two weeks. Carnival operators are the largest single financial partner of the fairs responsible for at least twenty-five percent (over \$1.2 billion) of gross annual revenue generated.

The Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) represents some 2,500 members, 200 carnivals, 15 circuses and hundreds of traveling food/game concessionaires in the United States. The vast majority of our members are small family businesses, many in their second and third generation of ownership. We rely on about 15,000 seasonal U.S. workers who make most of their annual income from jobs at events during a six to ten-month period. Two months of cancelled events is a devastating blow to these employees and their families.

To survive this situation caused both by a severe health crisis and government actions, both fairs and the carnivals of America are going to need specific and targeted government help to survive and recover. Thanks for your attention to this emergency.

Sincerely

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