



Legislative Priorities 1

Updated May 26, 2020

The exhibition, meetings, and events industry recognizes the need to protect public health, build confidence in the American people that when the time is right we will be ready with safety and sanitation measures and to establish a reopening of our industries economy.

- 1) **Incentivize a safe restart of the exhibitions, meetings, and events economy:** Create a temporary travel tax credit, allow businesses to fully deduct food and entertainment expenses, provide tax breaks for personal protective equipment (PPE) and sterilization of facilities, and enact tax measures to help revitalize U.S. trade shows and exhibitions.
 - a) **Enact tax measures to help revitalize U.S. Trade Shows and Exhibitions.** As businesses pull back on trade show investments now and in the future, this important sector of the business has been devastated. After 9/11, it took 4 years for spending to come back on U.S. trade shows. Without targeted tax breaks to help revitalize U.S. trade shows and exhibitions, the recovery time for this current crisis could be exponentially longer.
 - b) **Create a Temporary Travel Tax Credit.** To reduce the time it takes to get to full recovery, Congress should create a new tax credit to encourage domestic business travelers to travel within a specified time frame, similar to what was done through the homebuyer tax credit in the wake of the housing crisis. Specifically, create a tax credit worth 50 percent of qualified travel expenses incurred in the U.S. between the date of enactment and December 31, 2021, up to a maximum tax credit of \$4,000 per household. Qualified travel expenses should include any expense over \$50 that is incurred while traveling away from home in the U.S., with explicit reference to the expense of meals, lodging, recreation, transportation, amusement or entertainment, business meetings or events, and gasoline.
 - c) **Allow Full Deductibility of Food and Entertainment Business Expenses.** To support recovery in the food service and entertainment sectors—both of which are critical to economic recovery and social stability in many parts of the country—Congress must restore the full deductibility of ordinary and necessary entertainment and food and beverage business expenses for at least 3 years, allowing the deduction to phase down to 50 percent thereafter.
 - d) **Provide tax breaks to businesses to offset the cost of enhancing employee and consumer safety, including sterilizing facilities, PPE, and reconfiguration of facilities.** As reopening begins, travel businesses plan to enhance sanitation and provide PPE for their employees. Unfortunately, these additional investments come at time when businesses have historically low revenue and are struggling to maintain employment and pay basic utilities. Congress can help businesses reopen safely by providing tax credit for sanitation services necessary, COVID-related reconfiguration expenses and a 1:1 tax credit for PPE for their employees. Any tax credits should be refundable from 2019 and 2020 taxable income, as businesses will have very little revenue for which to apply the credits in 2020.



Why this matters to you:

- Every measure listed as our priorities serves a building block to a faster and safer recovery of the exhibitions, meetings, and events industry which will ensure a solid foundation to rebuilding the economy.
- All of these events are mission critical to the organizations that use these vehicles to; buy and sell goods and services, educate and engage in collaborative efforts, and allow people to get to the business of business.
- Without proper and timely implementation of our priorities will result in an expanded and prolonged economic recovery, resulting in millions of dollars and job losses

Our Call to Action: We urge all Members of Congress, to use all procedural levers at their legislative disposal, to move on these priorities swiftly and efficiently to get the economy moving.

Our message: In these extraordinary financial times, it is critical for the federal government to use whatever fiscal means they have at their disposal to prop up the economy. The lack of investment will cost the U.S. economy millions in revenue and jobs and prolong the recovery. Please consider all measures to keep the country from sliding into a depression.