



Legislative Priorities 3

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) **Support community-based economic recovery:** Provide \$10 billion in Economic Development Administration grants for DMOs and small businesses to promote healthy travel practices and encourage travel where it is safe.
 - a) To ensure Americans know when and how they can travel safely within the U.S. without posing a health risk to themselves or those around them, Congress should provide at least \$10 billion in grants to eligible State tourism offices and local DMOs to promote travel and support economic recovery efforts in local tourism markets. Specifically, appropriate \$10 billion in Economic Adjustment Assistance grants for the economic recovery of travel. Grants would be provided to State tourism offices and DMOs for the purposes of educating travelers on CDC and industry guidance for healthy and safe travel, and tourism promotion.

This proposal:

- i) Utilizes existing Economic Development Administration (EDA) process to distribute grants: EDA has the infrastructure to deliver grants in a timely fashion (versus starting up a new program).
- ii) Ensures broad eligibility for all communities: Funds would run through EDA's economic adjustment assistance and disaster assistance authorities, which would ensure broad eligibility for all communities.
- iii) Award grants on a discretionary basis directly to DMOs: Unlike Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), there would be no need for the Secretary of Commerce or EDA Administrator to establish a formula for distributing grants. There would also be no need for DMOs to rely on subgrants from CDBG grantees.
- iv) Use of grants would be limited to recovery activities for travel: This would ensure the funding can't be used for other EDA disaster activities.



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.