

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 15, 2021

The Honorable Isabella Casillas Guzman
Administrator, Small Business Administration
409 3rd Street, SW
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Administrator Guzman:

The Save Our Stages Act, now the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) program, was created to prevent widespread closures of venues that have been devastated by the loss of revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As supporters of the SVOG program, we urge you to take immediate action to ensure that the relief reaches eligible applicants without further delay.

With each passing day, more independent businesses are forced to shutter permanently or file for bankruptcy. Landlords and banks are no longer permitting deferrals and are pressing for immediate payment of past due accounts; businesses are receiving eviction notices; mom-and-pop businesses are being forced to sell.

It has been nearly six months since Congress passed the Save our Stages Act, nearly two months since the second launch of the program, and 51 days since the Small Business Administration (SBA) began receiving applications. We urge you to immediately take steps to ensure the funds are distributed to qualified applicants.

The SVOG program is unique, with necessary restrictions built in to ensure taxpayer funding goes only to eligible applicants in need. Under the terms of the law, the SVOG program requires the award of funding to eligible applicants who meet the simple requirements of the program. In this context, the insistence on strict compliance with competitive grant rules has created unnecessary delays in funding. Similarly, restrictions that SBA has placed on communication with grant applicants are unnecessary and have prevented the agency from providing administrative support to individual applicants that could have streamlined the application review process. Bureaucratic process cannot stand in the way of getting these desperately needed funds out the door.

Further delays are unacceptable and would have irreversible consequences for these industries. In an effort to keep our constituents informed and ensure our small businesses receive the support they were promised, we respectfully request you provide us with the following information:

1. The number SVOG awards that have been approved;
2. The number of SVOG grants that have been disbursed to recipients;
3. The amount of SVOG funding that has been disbursed;
4. The number of applications with holds;
5. The number of first-priority applicants that have received an award notice;

6. What SBA is doing to update small business owners on the status of their applications;
7. What SBA is doing to ensure applicants are not incorrectly associated with similar-named individuals and entities on the List of Excluded Individuals/Entities (LEIE);
8. What SBA is doing to correct false DNP designation notices sent to thousands of applicants;
9. SBA's justification for breaking grant awards, regardless of size, into multiple disbursements; and
10. SBA's timeline for subsequent disbursements and what grantees need to do to receive them.

Sincerely,

/s/ _____
John Cornyn
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Bill Cassidy
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Chuck Schumer
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Mike Crapo
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

/s/ _____
John Thune
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

/s/ _____
James Risch
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Rob Portman
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Ron Wyden
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Bill Hagerty
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Deb Fischer
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Maggie Hassan
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Steve Daines
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Thom Tillis
United States Senator

/s/ _____
John Boozman
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Roger Marshall
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Mitt Romney
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Chuck Grassley
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Mike Braun
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Ted Cruz
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Marco Rubio
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Patrick Leahy
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Ben Ray Luján
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Dick Durbin
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Robert Casey Jr.
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Mark Warner
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Jack Reed
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Ed Markey
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Bob Menendez
United States Senator

/s/ _____
John Hickenlooper
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Tina Smith
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Brian Schatz
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Patty Murray
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Mark Kelly
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Alex Padilla
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Angus King Jr.
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Jon Tester
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Jeff Merkley
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Joe Manchin
United States Senator

/s/ _____
Chris Coons
United States Senator