

California Legislature

May 19, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC

RE: Emergency Funding for the California Fairs Network

Dear Sirs and Madam:

Thank you for your leadership in assisting California as we work through the pandemic and start to plan for our State's recovery for the economic turmoil it has created.

In California, we have 78 fairs that operate on 76 fairgrounds that annually serve more than 35 million Californians in all 58 counties. They are funded solely by the revenue they generate from mass gathering, which are now prohibited due to COVID-19.

Fairgrounds are often the heartbeat of their community generating over \$35 million in non-profit and community benefits, and promoting a quality of life serving as gathering spots, recreation facilities and learning centers. Fairgrounds generate more than \$3.5 billion in annual economic impact while contributing over \$200 million in tax revenue to local and State governments.

Fairgrounds are also an essential part of the infrastructure necessary for the State to effectively respond in natural disasters and emergencies. During wildfires, Fairgrounds stage emergency vehicles and fire equipment, shelter displaced residents and animals and generally support the community efforts to cope with the emergency. For example, several Fairgrounds are serving as coronavirus testing centers, command centers for California's Office of Emergency Services, or homeless shelters to help the State's effort to deal with the myriad of issues resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

To date, as a result of the State's stay-at-home order and response to COVID-19, more than 31 fairs have canceled, postponed or drastically altered their main annual event, and more are expected to make that decision in the coming weeks. Educational, entertainment and family events that are important to the communities we serve, like seasonal trade shows, weddings,

family reunions, equestrian events and dog shows, quinceañeras, stand down events for veterans, non-profit organization fundraisers, learning center activities, and other community events have also been canceled, postponed or closed.

As you start your work on the next package of Federal economic relief, we respectfully request you consider appropriating \$300 million in emergency assistance to the Network of California Fairs. Without this level of support, many fairs will close and the communities they serve will suffer.

We look forward to working with you on this urgent matter and welcome the opportunity to talk with you in the near future. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



ROBERT RIVAS
Chair
Joint Cmtee on Fairs Allocation and Classification



ANNA M. CABALLERO
Vice-Chair



MEGAN DAHLE
Assemblymember, 1st District



JIM NIELSEN
Senator, 4th District



JORDAN CUNNINGHAM
Assemblymember, 35th District



BILL DODD
Senator, 3rd District



FRANK BIGELOW
Assemblymember, 5th District



CONNIE LEYVA
Senator, 20th District



SUSAN TALAMANTES-EGGMAN
Assemblymember, 13th District



RUDY SALAS
Assemblymember, 32nd District



DEVON MATHIS
Assemblymember, 26th District



MONIQUE LIMÓN
Assemblymember, 37th District



ADAM GRAY
Assemblymember, 21st District



MARC LEVINE
Assemblymember, 10th District



HEATH FLORA
Assemblymember, 12th District



JIM COOPER
Assemblymember, 9th District

CC: California Congressional Delegation
Secretary Karen Ross, California Dept. of Food and Agriculture
President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins, California Senate
Speaker Anthony Rendon, California Assembly