



July 10, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
 Speaker  
 United States House of Representatives  
 1236 Longworth House Office Building  
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
 Majority Leader  
 United States Senate  
 317 Russell Senate Office Building  
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

We represent the united voice of the California travel and tourism industry and we commend the bipartisan congressional efforts to pass the CARES Act and additional relief bills to protect American livelihoods and businesses. We write to express our belief that further, temporary COVID-19 business liability protections will be necessary to fully restart our economy and put Americans back to work.

Travel industry businesses across America closed in the interest of public health, with small travel businesses bearing the brunt of the economic losses; these businesses are now working to reopen responsibly. Without legislation establishing COVID-19 business liability protections, we fear businesses in California may be unwilling or reticent to reopen, prolonging the economic recovery period.

The travel industry is one of the hardest-hit industries in the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the public health crisis, \$1.1 trillion in traveler spending in the U.S. generated a total economic impact of \$2.6 trillion and supported a total of 15.8 million American jobs. So far this year, declines in travel have cost our economy 8 million jobs, and we are on track to lose a half trillion dollars in travel spending by the end of this year.

Travelers infused \$145 billion into the California's economy in 2019. This spending generated \$12.3 billion in local and state tax revenue and supported almost 1.2 million jobs for Californians. Due to ongoing closures in our state, approximately 613,000 tourism jobs have disappeared and it is anticipated that California will lose \$72.8 billion in visiting spending this year.

We understand the travel industry's economic recovery is contingent on the implementation of proper health and safety practices. U.S. Travel Association recently created a core set of health and safety guidance that travel industry businesses can adapt to reopen responsibly. This guidance includes limiting crowding in public spaces; providing touchless solutions for identification and payments; enhanced sanitation measures; encouraging health screening; modifying food and beverage preparation; and developing procedures for if an employee tests positive for COVID-19.

If businesses take the necessary steps to protect the health of customers and employees, there must be protections in place to allow them to reopen with confidence. These protections should be temporary to protect responsible businesses from frivolous lawsuits during this pandemic and

through a period of the economic recovery. Importantly, these measures must be put in place **immediately** so businesses can reopen with confidence and California's tourism economy can begin its recovery.

We thank you for all that you are doing to support California's travel industry and America's overall recovery efforts.

Signed,

California Travel & Tourism Coalition