



STATE OF WASHINGTON
GAMBLING COMMISSION

"Protect the Public by Ensuring that Gambling is Legal and Honest"

April 21, 2020

Washington State Congressional Delegation

Dear Members:

Thank you for your continued efforts providing much-needed economic assistance to Washingtonians. The Washington State Gambling Commission was formed in 1973 to protect the public by keeping gambling legal and honest. In the 45 years executing that mission, we work closely with tribal leaders, industry leaders, as well as thousands of small business entrepreneurs and non-profits to build a well-regulated system that works for everyone – consumers and businesses alike.

We ask that you continue to advocate for our state's gambling industry to ensure that our Tribal governmental partners and commercial and nonprofit licensees are included in any current and future stimulus planning. These businesses are an important part of our communities and the current shutdown has cutoff gambling revenues preventing them from employing thousands of workers and cutting off critical funding for our Tribal governmental partners and nonprofit licensees.

As you know, when Congress passed the CARES Act, it specifically provided relief to the gambling entertainment industry. However, the Small Business Administration (SBA) excluded hard-working small businesses in the very industry you sought to help. It is also important to note that our licensees' hospitality and lodging employees are negatively impacted during this shutdown since gaming aspects of these operations is only one part of their business.

We were encouraged to see the SBA revise their regulatory guidelines allowing some gambling small businesses to participate in the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). However, we fear that many of our licensees will still not receive the help they need, especially since the SBA ran out of PPP funding only a couple days after making these changes to their guidelines.

It is critical that our gambling-related small businesses and our Tribal governmental partners receive economic relief to help them buffer the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. We are concerned that our industry will continue to face barriers to participate in critical federal programs like the PPP. These programs are critical for gaming industry operators because most operate on very thin financial margins – especially our non-profit licensees.



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Our mission is not to advocate for gambling operations or to promote gambling activities. However, we have heard of the devastating financial impacts from our licensees during this pandemic, and all our fates are inextricably linked when the industry is shutdown. Therefore, with this grave threat in mind, please continue to allow our gambling industry to be eligible for federal stimulus funding and please contact the Small Business Administration (SBA) and ask them to look for ways to include all gambling-related small businesses for all the programs the administer, including the PPP.

Please continue to be a voice for our state's gambling industry to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to receive the help they deserve so they can weather this economic storm. Otherwise, we fear our licensees will not be able to recover from this economic shutdown.

If you have any questions, please contact Director Dave Trujillo at Dave.Trujillo@wsgc.wa.gov.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Bud Sizemore, Chair

Julia Patterson, Vice Chair

Cc:

Senator Steve Conway
Senator Jeff Holy
Representative Shelley Kloba
Representative Brandon Vick