

The Honorable Bob Casey

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dwight Evans

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Pat Toomey

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Brendan Boyle

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chrissy Houlahan

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Madeleine Dean

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mary Gay Scanlon

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

May 7, 2020

Dear Senator Casey, Senator Toomey, Representative Boyle, Representative Dean, Representative Evans, Representative Fitzpatrick, Representative Houlahan and Representative Scanlon,

As leaders in Southeast Pennsylvania's tourism and hospitality industry, we respectfully urge you to provide funding for one of the region's most robust sectors — an industry comprised of, but not limited to: lodging; transportation (including Uber and Lyft); meetings, conventions and business events; destination marketing organizations; museums; recreation and entertainment; restaurants and bars; wineries and breweries; and Airbnb short-term rental properties. Combined, the industry supports over 191,000 jobs¹ across Philadelphia's five-county region (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties), helping hardworking Pennsylvanians earn a living and support their families.

Together, we are grappling with the immediate and devastating impact of the current health crisis. This disaster, worse than 9/11 and the 2008 recession combined, has grounded travel to a halt and left the businesses that rely on visitor spending with no customers and their employees without jobs. From March 1 to April 25, there has been an estimated **\$1.6 billion lost in economic activity² in the Philadelphia region.**

As you know, visitor spending generates tax dollars—totaling \$980 million in 2018—which support state and local municipalities, enabling them to fund essential community services, including police and firefighting work, public schools, as well as the organizations like ours, signed below, that aim to attract visitors.

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics; 2019

² Tourism Economics

That is why we are requesting \$150 million in direct financial assistance to create an inclusive marketing campaign for the region that will generate immediate demand by consumers—locals and out-of-town guests—who can stay in our hotels, patronize bars and restaurants, buy tickets to cultural institutions and events, and create foot traffic to help retail and commercial corridors.

Marketing is one of the most efficient and immediate returns for generating revenue. Marketing creates demand. And demand creates jobs. The aim of our regional marketing campaign will be a unified strategy to help rebound the regional economy. It will reach all customers—locals and out-of-town visitors— with a customizable message and have a measurable ROI.

Our organizations play a critical role in the ongoing success of the region’s tourism industry. Recent history demonstrates tourism is an economic powerhouse that all businesses benefit from, with Philadelphia tourism data from 2018 showing³:

- **45.3 million visitors** from around the country and around the world
- **\$7.6 billion** in direct visitor spending in the five-county region—this spending injects dollars into the regional business ecosystem, which are then recirculated as consumer spending
- **\$12.2 billion in economic impact** — that’s more than **\$33 million per day**
- **\$980 million** in state and local taxes

The \$150 million investment would support our regional destination marketing organizations in attracting future visitors and generate revenue at places you’d expect: the airport, hotels, sports arenas, the convention center, tour companies, museums, restaurants, bars, concert halls and shops. However, visitor spending also supports businesses that support the work of our industry: printers, commercial laundry operations, marketing agencies, construction companies, union contractors, event-planning firms, food suppliers and hundreds of small businesses — many of which support low- and middle-income communities.

Additionally, your help in securing funding will put people back to work. As a result of COVID-19, tourism-related jobs are at risk of being lost permanently. These jobs are accessible to people of all skill, experience and education levels. They support families. They help people buy homes. And they enable parents to send their kids to college. We’re talking about more than 191,000 tourism-related jobs in the five-county region. We are talking about protecting the livelihoods of workers and families throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania.

We are grateful for your continued support of the tourism industry. And we know you are working around the clock, as we all are, to support the travel workforce and businesses that are among the most severely impacted by the crisis. With this \$150 million investment, we can get people back to work and restart Greater Philadelphia’s economic engine — in part driven by the

³ Econsult Solutions, Inc.

tourism and hospitality industry. We look forward to working with you to secure emergency funding that will give Greater Philadelphia's tourism and hospitality agencies the financial resources necessary to spur visitor spending as soon as people can leave their homes again.

Thank you in advance for your support of this important effort.

Signed,



Paul Bencivengo,
President & COO,
VISIT BUCKS COUNTY



Ed Grose
Executive Director
Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association



Mike Bowman,
President & CEO,
Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board



Jeff Guaracino,
President & CEO,
VISIT PHILADELPHIA



Steve Byrne,
Executive Director,
Visit Delco, PA

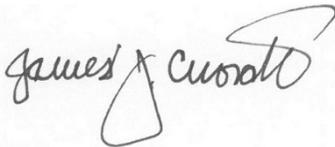


Susan Hamley,
Executive Director,
Chester County Conference & Visitors
Bureau



Julie Coker,
President & CEO,
Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau

John J. McNichol,
President & CEO,
Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority



James J. Cuorato,
President & CEO,
Independence Visitor Center Corporation



Rob Wonderling
President & CEO
Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce

This letter is also signed by the following CEO's and Executive Directors from the tourism and hospitality industry: