

July 15, 2020



The Hon. Jared Golden
1223 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Mike Kelly
1707 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressmen Golden and Kelly:

On behalf of the American Pyrotechnics Association (APA) and over 150 small family businesses in the fireworks entertainment industry, we are writing to express our strong support for the Reviving the Economy Sustainability Towards a Recovery in Twenty-twenty (RESTART) Act.

The professional fireworks entertainment industry has been almost completely shut down since the COVID-19 pandemic hit the nation. The vast majority of Independence Day celebrations were cancelled along with all sporting events, festivals, fairs, and concerts resulting in little to no income for these family businesses. Because our industry requires large public gatherings, we will be one of the very last industries to fully reopen sometime in mid-2021. This has resulted in tremendous financial hardship to most of our professional display fireworks entertainment companies.

The COVID-19 crisis has brought the events that our industry provides fireworks entertainment services for to a halt and we do not anticipate any measurable recovery until large gatherings can resume. We just don't get a do-over when July 4th celebrations are cancelled. Our member companies are grateful for the financial relief provided under the CARES Act, especially the temporary lifeline provided by the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). However, the eight (8) week PPP program doesn't address the 38 weeks until next summer's Independence Day celebration season. As a result, our small family businesses are now unfortunately implementing personnel layoffs and salary reductions once again in an attempt to survive the financial hardship caused by the extreme lack of income.

We strongly support the RESTART Act, which will provide much needed financial relief to small family businesses most affected by the COVID-19 crisis and will address the now inevitable and unavoidable longer-term losses that our members are facing. Specifically, by creating a loan program tailored to the needs of small family businesses who have been decimated due to a lack of income. We see some ray of hope that we will be able to celebrate Independence Day next year; however, without the relief offered by this program, our member companies will suffer irreparable economic harm and many of our small family businesses will not survive.

We urge Congress to take swift action and pass the RESTART Act so that our member companies can be here next year when America is ready to celebrate its pride, patriotism and Independence on July 4, 2021.

If there is anything that the APA can do to assist in advancing this legislation, or if you or your staff have any questions regarding the fireworks entertainment industry, please do not hesitate to APA's Executive Director, Julie L. Heckman at (240) 401-4513 or jheckman@americanpyro.com or former congressman Jeff Denham at (202) 778-9322 or jeff.denham@klgates.com.

Yours truly,

Michael Collar
President

Julie L. Heckman
Executive Director

Preserving & Promoting an American Tradition

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