

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0309

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden Jr.
President of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader, United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader, United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader, House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Nearly one year since COVID-19 became widespread in the United States, countless Arizona small businesses are still suffering the negative effects of COVID-19 related travel restrictions, increased costs related to coronavirus prevention measures, and ongoing uncertainty due to the unpredictable spread of the virus. I am thankful that Congress has stepped up on a bipartisan basis to provide meaningful relief for our small businesses through the creation of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG), and the expansion of the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program (EIDL).

While these programs have provided a lifeline for thousands of Arizona businesses, too many Arizona businesses have been unable to access this assistance, either because they remain unaware of the existence of these programs, are unsure of whether they qualify for these programs, or lack the resources or lender relationships needed to apply for these assistance programs.

As Congress discusses the need for additional coronavirus relief, I write to request that the Small Business Administration (SBA) establish a grant program to help local governments, chambers of commerce, nonprofits, and other small business resource partners to establish Community Navigator programs to increase awareness for and participation in all COVID-19 relief programs administered by the SBA. Given the enormous strain that has been placed on SBA staff, as well as existing small business resource partners, the creation of a new program to help support and expand the work already done by many local chambers of commerce, local and tribal governments, and community nonprofits to reach out to small business owners to help them understand the assistance that is available and provide assistance when applying. Given the particular needs of many businesses located in socially and economically disadvantaged

communities, a program that allows community partners to conduct proactive outreach to small businesses will go a long way toward ensuring the equitable distribution of coronavirus relief.

In addition to a navigator program, I ask that future relief legislation also ensure that SBA is required to operate a nationwide hotline to provide information and answer questions from business owners about available relief and to implement a national awareness and education advertising campaign to promote participation in relief programs. Importantly, all of these resources must be available to and accessible for non-English speakers.

The needs of Arizona's business communities grow each day, and as Congress looks to provide additional relief, it is critical that we also provide assistance to help all businesses access this relief in an equitable way. I look forward to working with you all to accomplish these objectives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Kelly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" and the last name "Kelly" clearly distinguishable.

Mark Kelly
United States Senator