



March 11, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

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

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Leader
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

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

Re: Potential Aid for Industries Impacted by Coronavirus

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders McConnell, McCarthy and Schumer:

The American Society for Nutrition (ASN) appreciates your consideration and important work on an economic stimulus plan to help the United States' economy in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. Founded in 1928, ASN is a nonprofit scientific society with more than 7,000 members in more than 75 countries working in academia, clinical practice, government and industry. ASN is dedicated to bringing together the world's top nutrition research scientists to advance our knowledge and application of nutrition to improve public health. **Nutrition 2020**, ASN's annual scientific conference convenes approximately 3,600 top scientific researchers, practitioners and public health professionals from around the world. Nutrition 2020 is set this year to be held May 30-June 2, 2020, at the Washington Convention Center in Seattle, Washington.

Given the global nature and location of ASN's upcoming annual meeting and the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation, we write to request federal intervention to support the airline, travel and other targeted industries impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic. **ASN urges you to also include associations, nonprofits and other tax-exempt organizations within any federal aid packages or supplemental appropriations measures**, as ASN will likely experience significant financial losses from event cancellations and reduced meeting attendance as a result of COVID-19. According to the Events Industry Council's 2018 Economic Significance Study conducted by Oxford Economics¹, more than 1.9 million meetings occur in the United States each year – with more than 250 million attendees. These meetings

¹ Events Industry Council. Economic Significance of Meetings to the US Economy. February 2018.

<https://dev-meetingsmeanbusiness.pantheonsite.io/sites/default/files/Economic%20Significance%20of%20Meetings%20to%20the%20US%20Economy.pdf>

contribute more than \$446 billion to U.S. gross domestic product and directly support 5.9 million jobs nationwide.

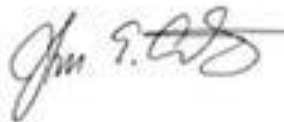
As you are no doubt aware, the fast-spreading COVID-19 epidemic has prompted the cancellation of dozens of major meetings and events in the U.S. and forced other event sponsors to consider cancelling or postponing innumerable other events dependent on in-person attendance at convention centers, hotels and other event facilities. Many of these meetings and events, such as Nutrition 2020, also attract international participants, who generate 11.5% (about \$38 billion) of direct spending during their visits to the U.S. International travel to the U.S. has dropped sharply during the COVID-19 outbreak and signs point to this trend growing until the virus is brought under control. The U.S. Travel Association forecasts international flights to the U.S. will plummet 6% over the next three months alone, which would be the largest decline since the 2008 economic crisis.

Additionally, many associations operate similarly to small businesses and are greatly impacted if employees are forced to take sick leave or are quarantined as a result of COVID-19 interaction. We are aware that the Administration and Congress are considering measures for small businesses that may require cash flow assistance amid the outbreak, and **urge that tax-exempt entities like ASN be included in any temporary aid designed to stem the economic fallout resulting from COVID-19.**

ASN also appreciates your important efforts to ensure food security for all Americans during this critical time. Federal nutrition programs will become even more crucial than they already are as hourly and other workers are forced to self-quarantine or to stay home to provide child coverage in the event schools are closed. Many children rely on the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs to supply their weekly meals and need reliable food sources should schools close or move to distance only learning. We appreciate your consideration of reauthorization of a Pandemic Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (P-SNAP) during the COVID-19 outbreak, as well as additional support for our nation's nutrition programs to ensure access to nutritious foods for millions of Americans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John E. Courtney, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer, American Society for Nutrition

CC:

The Honorable Richard Neal, Chairman
United States House of Representatives Committee on Ways & Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady, Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives Committee on Ways & Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley, Chairman
United States Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ron Wyden, Ranking Member
United States Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chairwoman
United States House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chair
United States Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Vice Chairman
United States Senate Committee on Appropriations
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