



The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 30, 2020

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

Thank you for your leadership at this challenging time for our country. As you consider forthcoming COVID-19 relief legislation, we ask you to prioritize assistance for the hardest-hit industries, like our country's beloved movie theaters.

No doubt you are hearing from many, many businesses that need relief. Movie theaters are in dire straits, and we urge you to redirect unallocated funds from the CARES Act to proposals that help businesses that have suffered the steepest revenue drops due to the pandemic, or to enact new proposals such as the RESTART Act (S. 3814/H.R. 7481). Absent a solution designed for their circumstances, theaters may not survive the impact of the pandemic.

The pandemic has been a devastating financial blow to cinemas. 93% of movie theater companies had over 75% in losses in the second quarter of 2020. If the status quo continues, 69% of small and mid-sized movie theater companies will be forced to file for bankruptcy or to close permanently, and 66% of theater jobs will be lost. Our country cannot afford to lose the social, economic, and cultural value that theaters provide.

The moviegoing experience is central to American life. 268 million people in North America went to the movies last year to laugh, cry, dream, and be moved together. Theaters are great unifiers where our nation's most talented storytellers showcase their cinematic accomplishments. Every aspiring filmmaker, actor, and producer dreams of bringing their art to the silver screen, an irreplaceable experience that represents the pinnacle of filmmaking achievement.

As well as their critical cultural impact, theaters are economic force multipliers. In addition to the 150,000 employees working in cinemas nationwide, the industry supports millions of jobs in movie production and distribution, and countless others in surrounding restaurants and retailers that rely on theaters for foot traffic. Movie theaters are also leaders in employing underrepresented groups, including people with disabilities, senior citizens, and first-time job holders. Cinemas are an essential industry that represent the best that American talent and creativity have to offer. But now we fear for their future.

Theaters need specific relief targeted to their circumstances. We urge you to come together on a bipartisan solution that provides this relief, by reallocating unspent funds from the CARES Act toward programs designed for industries like movie theaters, or by enacting new proposals such as the RESTART Act. These solutions would fulfill Congress's intent in helping severely distressed sectors of the economy and ensure that our resources are focused on the industries that need them the most.

Please fight for our country's beloved and essential cinemas by including relief for them in any forthcoming COVID-19 legislation. Thank you for your leadership and for considering this request.

Sincerely,

John Fithian
President & CEO
NATO

Russ Hollander
National Executive Director
DGA

Charles Rivkin
Chairman & CEO
MPA

Thomas Schlamme
President
DGA

Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje
Agustin Almodóvar
Pedro Almodóvar
Wes Anderson
Judd Apatow
Jon Avnet
Sean Baker
Noah Baumbach
Michael Bay
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Greta Gerwig
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Patty Jenkins
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Miranda July
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Jason Reitman
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