



January 29, 2021

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

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

Dear Congressional Leaders:

As you consider the next phase of coronavirus relief, we urge you to provide much needed assistance to airports and the diverse group of aviation concessionaires that provide valuable services at airport facilities across the country. Both airports and airport concessionaires have been hit hard by the pandemic and the significant loss of revenue throughout the aviation system as passenger traffic remains 60 to 70 percent below pre-pandemic levels. The impacts on airports and the businesses that serve them have been severe, and the prospects for a quick recovery are dim. Air passengers, upon whom airports and concessionaires depend, are not projected to return to pre-pandemic levels for several years at best.

As representatives of airports and a broad group of airport concessionaires, Airports Council International – North America (ACI-NA); the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE); the Airport Restaurant and Retail Association (ARRA); the Airport Minority Advisory Council (AMAC); the American Car Rental Association (ACRA); the International Association of Airport Duty Free Shops (IAADFS); and the National Parking Association (NPA) request your support for \$17 billion in identified needs for airports to respond to new operational demands; pay for debt service on bonds; keep critical health, safety, and security projects on track; and employ airport staff. Collectively, we also ask that Congress provide an additional \$3.64 billion in federal assistance to allow airports to provide “minimum annual guarantees” (MAGs) and rent relief for airport concessionaires.

Funding for airports and concessionaires is critical to the recovery of our aviation system and the broader economy. We urge the inclusion of critical assistance for both groups as part of the relief bill currently being assembled by Senate and House leaders.

Thank you for your consideration.



Sincerely,

Rob Wigington
Executive Director
Airport Restaurant and Retail Association

Anthony W. Barnes
Chief Operating Officer
Airport Minority Advisory Council

Todd Hauptli
President and Chief Executive Officer
American Association of Airport
Executives

Kevin M. Burke
President and Chief Executive Officer
Airports Council International North America

Christine Banning
President
National Parking Association

Sharon Faulkner
Executive Director
American Car Rental Association

Michael Payne
President and Chief Executive Officer
International Association of Airport Duty
Free Stores

ARRA Call to Action: Continue the Relief Effort, Now!
Call your Representatives and Senators A-S-A-P

January 30, 2021

ARRA Members:

The relief we received in December's COVID-19 package was a momentous first step for our industry, but clearly more relief will be needed as the pandemic continues to rage on. Losses will continue to mount, and more jobs and businesses will remain at risk or be lost, absent additional relief now.

It is critical that the next COVID-19 relief package builds upon and expands the support Congress provided in the last bill. Congress provided only \$2 billion for airports and dedicated \$200 million for MAG/rent abatement, nowhere near the amounts we requested and needed. But Congressional leaders and the incoming Biden Administration promised that it was only a down payment, and more would be provided in the new Congress.

NOW IS A CRITICAL TIME TO CONTACT YOUR SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES AGAIN TO URGE THEM TO INCLUDE FUNDING FOR CONCESSIONAIRES AS PART OF ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR AIRPORTS.

ACI-NA, AAAE and our airport concessions coalition yesterday reached agreement on a joint request to Congress asking for \$3.64B for full abatement of airport concessionaires' Minimum Annual Guarantees (MAG) and rents, in addition to \$17 billion airports have requested. The requested amount of relief for concessions is based on FAA data that shows airports lost that amount of concessions revenue in 2020 compared to 2019, and ACI-NA's forecast of expected revenue losses for April 2021 – March 2022. The airports—ACI-NA and AAAE-- are requesting \$17B to cover anticipated airport revenue losses, debt service and additional COVID-related costs. ARRA, with the concessions coalition members, worked with ACI-NA and AAAE to garner their support for \$3.64B for concessionaires' relief.

Attached is a joint letter we have sent to House and Senate leaders requesting the additional funding for airports and concessions, co-signed by ACI-NA, AAAE, ARRA, AMAC, American Car Rental Association (ACRA), International Association of Airport Duty Free Stores (IAADFS), and the National Parking Association (NPA),

Now it is critical that our voice -- your voice -- is heard! Congress is developing the next COVID relief package and the House may vote as early as this week on a budget reconciliation resolution which may become the vehicle for passing a COVID relief measure.

WE NEED YOUR HELP—PLEASE ACT NOW.

Below are talking points and a sample letter you can customize and send to your congressional delegation. Please utilize them as you engage with your respective Senators and Representatives. It is important that you customize the letter to reflect your company's situation, job losses and importance to the community, and the need for immediate assistance and relief. A phone call to your legislators or their staff will also be very effective and helpful.

Please urge your legislators to contact House and Senate Leadership [listed below] on the need for additional COVID-19 relief for our industry. Also ask them to **contact the chairs and ranking members of committees they serve on**, especially the Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and both House and Senate Appropriations Committees.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please let us know. Any feedback you receive from your Senators or Representatives or their staff is very helpful.

Find your Representative [here](#)

Find your Senators [here](#)

House Leadership:

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- House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)
- House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA)

Senate Leadership

- Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY)
- Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY)

TALKING POINTS/DRAFT LETTER FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS **FOR AIRPORT CONCESSIONS RELIEF**

Dear Senator/Representative _____:

- On behalf of _____, I am writing to ask for your support for Congress to provide specific funding for airport concessionaires as part of ongoing efforts to provide relief from COVID-19's devastating impact on our businesses and employees.
- *[Describe your company/operation and impact of COVID-19...]*
- Our company, like concessionaires at all U.S. airports, delivers the essential services and hospitality experiences to all travelers who come through our nation's airports. We are large and small businesses, many of which are minority and women owned disadvantaged business enterprises (ACDBEs.)
- As you consider this new round of COVID-19 relief, we ask you to provide at least \$3.64B to see America's air travel concessionaires through continued hardship, in addition to providing the funding airports have requested. Providing this critically needed emergency assistance will ensure that airports and concessionaires can continue to operate, cover debt requirements and begin to recover when air travel returns to normal, pre-pandemic levels.
- As the pandemic continues on a relentless pace, air travel remains depressed around 60-70% below pre-pandemic levels. Concessionaires depend on passenger volumes to survive. At these levels, we have suffered massive losses of business sales and income, and thus are unable to pay airports 'minimum annual guarantees' (MAGs) and rents while we struggle to cover fixed operating expenses, higher costs due to COVID and service existing debt from large investments in public airports.
- By providing \$3.64 billion specifically for concessions relief, airports would have some of the funds they need to provide critically needed relief from 'minimum annual guarantees' (MAGs), rents and other fees that my company and other concessionaires are otherwise contracted to pay based on pre-pandemic traffic levels.
- According to FAA data, airports lost more than approximately \$3.64 billion in revenue from the approximately 70% decline in passengers and airport concessions in 2020 compared to 2019. Similar losses are expected in 2021 and likely beyond. Airports depend on these revenues for their operations, improvement, capital development and debt payments. Our business cannot afford to pay MAGs and rents when we have lost so much of our business and income. We are struggling just to stay afloat.
- Airport restaurant and retail concessions alone lost 95% of their business and were forced to furlough approximately 95% of their employees within the first few months of the pandemic. In the next 18 months, airport restaurant and retail concessionaires will lose estimated 3 years of profit. If airports continue to suffer depressed traffic, concessionaires will continue to suffer huge losses and face more even more closures, and some will fail.
- Relief to concessionaires is relief to business owners, predominately small companies, who are personally invested in the local airport and the community, employ local residents and create jobs and economic benefits for the community through vendors, suppliers and contractors.

- We ask you to support concessions relief and urge congressional leaders to make sure that the next relief package includes airports and funds dedicated to help concessionaires.

Thank you for your consideration.