



UNITED DALLAS ARTS SUPPORT FOR CORNYN & KLOBUCHAR'S SAVE OUR STAGES ACT

111 LOCAL ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT ORGANIZATIONS SIGN LETTER BACKING BILL

(DALLAS) The Dallas arts community has joined together to support passage of the bipartisan COVID-19 relief measure, the **Save Our Stages Act**, sponsored by U.S. Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

111 Dallas arts and cultural organizations and performance venues signed a letter to Senator Cornyn in support of the measure, which was announced last Wednesday. The list includes nonprofit, for-profit and City-managed venues. A similar letter urging support of the Save Our Stages Act also was sent to Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX). The arts and entertainment community wants the act included in the new round of COVID-19 relief funding being considered by Congress.

Since mid-March, all performance venues in Dallas have been closed with no ticket or ancillary revenue being earned for the theaters or the organizations using them. Additionally, all Broadway and concert tours have stopped and reduced-capacity seating due to social distancing makes reopening a financial challenge. Save Our Stages would provide \$10B in grants through the Small Business Administration to help keep live entertainment and performance venues alive until they are able to fully reopen, which for many, may not be until next year.

“Our city’s stages have been closed with no earned revenue for four and a half months,” says Lily Weiss, executive director of the Dallas Arts District. “Our community has to recognize if we don’t get some substantial relief soon, we may lose some of these venues as well as the artists and organizations that rely on them for their performances.”

“Live music and performing arts venues were among the *first to be closed* during the COVID-19 crisis and will be some of the *last to return* to full operations,” states the letter to Senator Cornyn. “These grants will help us stay afloat until we can reopen, covering critical operating expenses like rent, utilities, PPE, maintenance, and keep critical employees on the job and off the unemployment rolls.”

Some of those signing on to the letter include nonprofit performance venues like the AT&T Performing Arts Center, Latino Cultural Center, Dallas Children’s Theater and Bishop Arts Theatre Center. It also includes popular for-profit venues such as the Bomb Factory and Trees in Deep Ellum.

“As you can see, the range of organizations listed on the letter extends beyond the performing arts,” says Joanna St. Angelo, president of DACAC, the Dallas Area Cultural Advocacy Coalition.

“The Dallas arts community signed on in a show of unity, recognizing the staggering financial challenges faced by us all.”

A recent survey of Dallas arts and cultural organizations found \$33.65M in financial losses from COVID-19 related closures from March 13 through May 31. 649 jobs were lost in that period and those numbers are expected to grow as forgivable Payroll Protection Program loans expire. A new survey is underway to update the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the Dallas arts community.

The letters to Senators Cornyn and Cruz also encourage expanded financial relief for cities and states whose budgets have been devastated by the pandemic’s economic impact. City and state support are critical to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, and severe budget cuts are expected. Additional federal relief could soften the blow.

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