PENNSYLVANIA BUS ASSOCIATION
Representing the Motorcoach Industry Since 1923

October 21, 2020

The Honorable Stan Saylor
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
245 Main Capitol Building
PO Box 202094
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2094

The Honorable Pat Browne
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee
281 Main Capitol
Senate Box 203016
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3016

The Honorable Matthew Bradford
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
512E Main Capitol Building
PO Box 202070
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2070

The Honorable Vincent Hughes
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee
545 Main Capitol
Senate Box 203007
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3007

RE: PENNSYLVANIA BUS ASSOCIATION SUPPORT FOR CARES ACT FUNDING

Dear Chairmen:

Your immediate assistance is needed for our family business to survive! As you consider how to spend the remaining $1.3 Billion in federal CARES Act funding, the Pennsylvania Bus Association (PBA) **urges you to consider including the motorcoach, tour, and travel industries**, which has thus far been largely ignored.

The Pennsylvania Bus Association (http://pabus.org/) was founded in 1923 and has functioned without interruption and with an unrelenting commitment to the safety of the traveling public and the economic well-being of its member companies. PBA boasts a well-rounded program of activities for both bus operator and supplier members and carries a current membership of over 750 entities. Governmental affairs, travel and tourism marketing, education, safety, and communication constitute the major areas of involvement for this, one of the oldest public passenger transportation associations in the United States.

We do not go to Capitol Hill on a regular basis looking for handouts and we are not part of the government system like the airlines, pulling into government-funded airports or Amtrak, which is partly a government system. However, it is important for us to raise awareness of the economic devastation inflicted upon travel and transportation operators by COVID-19 and the subsequent shutdown which has not improved.

The $15 billion motorcoach industry typically provides 600 million passenger trips annually through intercity scheduled service, charters, and tours. There are approximately 3,000 bus motorcoach operators in the United States with a fleet of 36,000 vehicles that are largely sitting unused during this trying time. These motorcoaches typically provide invaluable services for the people of Pennsylvania and those in the other 49 states across the country – from employees commuting to work to visitors enjoying our states' beauty, and from students on field trips to college sports teams travelling to competition. These businesses also provide a direct link between our rural areas and more urban centers and serve as critical connections to other modes of travel, including air and rail. **Our member companies have probably transported you, your children or grandchildren to educational outings or athletic trips in the past**.

Yet, motorcoach, tour and travel industries were not included in the previous assistance packages provided by Congress; even though, we carry almost 20 times as many passengers as Amtrak. The motorcoach industry is

second to domestic airlines in moving people. The American Bus Association (ABA) said that in 2018, privately-owned motorcoaches transported 600 million people. The airlines flew 779 million, and Amtrak trains took 31.7 million people on its popular Northeast corridor runs and long-distance trains.

The motorcoach, tour and travel industries are dominated by small businesses, and most often these are family-owned, multigenerational businesses. These small businesses are not capable of withstanding even a modest downturn in domestic travel and tourism, let alone the devastating situation the travel industry is currently experiencing. Small businesses form the backbone of the U.S. tour and travel industry, as well as provide vital links for rural communities, commuting employees, school children, and price-sensitive travelers.

While Congress continues to negotiate an additional stimulus package to help workers, firms and industries facing severe economic losses by this pandemic, there is no guarantee that our family motorcoach business, and tour and travel industries will be included.

Therefore, our members need help from the state in the form of targeted assistance to the motorcoach, tour, and travel industries. Specifically, CARES Act funding available for tourism could be directed toward small- and medium-sized motorcoach businesses in the form of assistance grants to offset lost revenue caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the tourism industry, including small arts and cultural organizations, is in dire need of assistance due to the pandemic and may need assistance grants just to stay in business.

With a second wave of the pandemic reportedly underway, the motorcoach, tour, and travel industries will not be able to survive further reductions in travel without some assistance from our government.

We respectfully request your consideration of the motorcoach, tour, and travel industries when appropriating the remaining $1.3 Billion in federal CARES Act funding.

Sincerely,

John W. Bailey
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