

July 16, 2020

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

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

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

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

House Ways and Means Committee Leadership
House Financial Services Committee Leadership
Senate Committee on Finance Leadership

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

On behalf of the undersigned groups representing millions of employees and many millions more customers, we urge you to include a tax credit in the next federal stimulus package to protect the safety of workers, customers, and the public. Such a tax credit should be targeted, temporary, and available to business entities and nonprofits. Businesses and nonprofits have and will continue to spend an enormous amount of expenses to ensure that workplaces are as safe and healthy for workers and customers as possible. This is essential in restoring confidence with the American public.

There are several bipartisan bills ([S 4178](#), [HR 7079](#), [HR 7222](#), [HR 7216](#), and others not yet with a bill number) in both the House of Representatives and Senate to create such a tax credit. While they differ in structure, scope, and size, they all recognize the enormous unexpected costs of creating and maintaining healthy spaces for workers and customers due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This credit is not a bailout or a handout. It simply helps to offset a portion of the unexpected expenses related to maintaining a healthy environment. The credit is necessary to help protect against further COVID-19 infections, as well as help with other conditions such as asthma, Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), and influenza just to name a few.

There is significant research that the novel coronavirus causing COVID-19 can survive on surfaces; proper cleaning and disinfection can help to reduce risks from the virus that has to date, sickened at least 3 million Americans. Some estimate that the actual number of people affected maybe 10 times higher. The Centers for Disease Control, World Health Organization, state and local guidance, as well as industry best practices related to reopening safely all focus on requiring a combination of properly cleaning and disinfecting these spaces, personal hygiene practices, utilizing personal protective equipment, screening and testing workers when necessary, and following social distancing as appropriate to protect workers and customers.

ISSA—The Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association estimates that the increased cleaning costs associated with the coronavirus are 50 percent or more compared to normal due the increased use of specific cleaning products, equipment upgrades, and increased frequency. For example, [ISSA estimates an additional \\$56,160 in cleaning-related costs for a general 3,000 square foot retail space](#). This is in addition to the costs of PPE, testing, employee training, and other important COVID-19-related expenses.

A tax credit would ensure that businesses and nonprofits already struggling financially can cover a portion of these critical, yet unexpected expenses related to COVID-19.

We respectfully request that you consider the following recommendations as you evaluate and hopefully include any reopening tax credit proposal in the next stimulus bill.

Qualified expenses should include:

1. Cleaning and workplace safety-related costs, including staff training; applicable building certifications; purchasing necessary cleaning, sanitation, and disinfection-related products and equipment; as well as the hiring of a professional company to clean, sanitize, and disinfect.
2. Personal protection equipment
3. Other expenditures associated with maintaining a healthy physical workplace, including those necessary to comply with federal, state, and local guidelines, as well as industry best practices

The structure of the tax credit should be:

1. Neutral in terms of business type
2. Based on estimated average increased costs—at least \$25,000 per location
3. Can be applied against qualified expenses incurred over at least the next nine months
4. Eligible for carryover (if general business credit) to the next year, where the taxpayer has a tax liability or refundability (if a payroll tax credit)¹

We stand ready to provide resources and work with your offices to develop policies to help protect against the future transmission of the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Thank you for your consideration of this suggested provision for inclusion in the next stimulus package. We believe this is critical to the safety of Americans as businesses re-open and workers return to their jobs. The proposal will also prepare workplaces to better deal with future emerging pathogens that we could be confronted with in the future.

Respectfully,

American Hotel and Lodging Association
Asian American Hotel Owners Association

¹ For nonprofit employers, the credit would need to be applicable to payroll taxes or other taxes that they pay.

Building Owners and Managers Association International
Building Service Contractors Association International
FMI – The Food Industry Association
Go LIVE Together
Household & Commercial Products Association (HCPA)
Independent Office Products & Furniture Dealers Association
International Association of Exhibitions and Events
International Council of Shopping Centers
International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association
International Franchise Association
International Safety Equipment Association
ISSA – The Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association
NACS
National Association of Truckstop Operators
National Council of Nonprofits
National Grocers Association
National Independent Venue Association
National Office Products Alliance
National Pest Management Association
National Restaurant Association
National Small Business Association
North American Meat Institute
Office Furniture Dealers Alliance
Petroleum Marketers Association of America
Professional Beauty Association
Real Estate Roundtable
Society of Independent Show Organizers
U.S. Travel Association
Virginia Small Business Partnership