



July 29, 2020

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

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

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

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

As the collective public policy voice for the international educational and cultural exchange community, we request that the next economic relief legislation include longer-term relief for organizations significantly impacted by current conditions due to the pandemic until recovery is possible. This includes allowing organizations who were eligible for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and other small business relief programs to receive a second round of PPP and small business relief assistance.

International exchange programs are heavily dependent on travel and people-to-people interactions. Communities that sponsor and host these programs are being negatively impacted by the ongoing pause of in-person programs for federally-funded and many privately-funded exchange programs, continuing international travel restrictions, as well as the recent suspension of nonimmigrant visas for some privately-funded exchange programs. Earlier this year, the impact on international exchange programs from the pandemic alone was projected to result in losses to the U.S. economy of more than \$233 million and nearly 7,000 American jobs. The continuing significant curtailment of exchange programs will lead to an increase in employee layoffs, which will have a negative ripple effect throughout our economy.

Given the ongoing pandemic conditions, we request longer-term relief assistance for the full range of stakeholders in the international educational and cultural exchange community until recovery is possible, including second round of PPP and small business relief.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ilir Zherka".

Ilir Zherka
Executive Director

CC: Members of United States Congress