



December 3, 2020

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dan Newhouse
United States House of Representatives
1323 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: COVID-19 Economic Relief Measures

Dear Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell and Congressman Newhouse,

Thank you for your continued work and leadership in response to COVID-19.

COVID-19 has created a crisis which must be acted upon by Congress. Bipartisan action has been proposed for an \$908 billion COVID-19 relief package. **As the voice for business in the Tri-Cities, the Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce urges your support of this package.**

Many Tri-Citians are unemployed and businesses are shutting down or getting ready for layoffs. It is imperative that Congress respond immediately under these circumstances.

The relief measure should include additional unemployment insurance that would provide extra weekly benefits; additional funding for the Paycheck Protection Program to assist small businesses; an easier and faster PPP forgiveness process; and a new liability provision to block pandemic-related lawsuits temporarily with the intent to give individual states time to develop their own legal response.

The Regional Chamber is hearing from many businesses each day. The following is just one example from a female, Latina business owner in downtown Pasco:

“As a single mother, it’s been very difficult to seek aide while raising a family of five. ...We see ourselves up against very serious, dire circumstances. Notice after notice of bills past due seem to be never ending. The stress seems to be all consuming and beginning to take a toll on my family and I. We are more than just a banquet hall; we are a cornerstone of our community. No longer can families celebrate joyous occasions that date back centuries in our banquet hall. From Wish Upon a Star Foundation to various nonprofit events, we have always assisted our community in time of need. Now it is us who so humbly ask for help in return. We are unfortunately not making enough to cover expenses. Our three banquet halls are at a complete standstill. All events have been postponed and no payment in sight.”

Please, do not delay in supporting these proposed measures. Our region is battling COVID-19 more fiercely now than ever before. Tri-Citians in crisis need relief as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Lori Mattson, IOM
President & CEO,
Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce



Jim Arneson
President, Community First Bank
Chair, Local Government Affairs Committee