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Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce Delivers Letter to Congress Supporting \$18 Billion in Recovery Support for Creative Economy

Centerville, MA – May 4, 2021. The Cape Cod Chamber joins a coalition of 113 chambers of commerce in 46 states to deliver a [letter](#) to U.S. House and Senate leadership asking that \$18 billion be allocated within the forthcoming infrastructure recovery bills specifically to support creative economic recovery. The businesses represented by these chambers collectively serve over 33 million Americans.

Spearheaded by the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, and Americans for the Arts, the letter asserts that dedicated recovery funds for the creative economy are essential to getting local small businesses and economies back on their feet. The letter was built on two previous letters of support ([May 2020](#), [August 2020](#)) for relief and recovery efforts to help the arts, culture, and the creative sector.

The creative economy is an economic engine that generated \$919.7 billion in economic activity in 2019, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis—a larger percentage of the GDP than transportation, tourism, or construction, and a crucial component of every state's economic health. While the 2020 CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 provided much-needed relief to many businesses, there are critical gaps in the aid that fail to meet the needs of the creative and cultural economy. A report from the Brookings Institution found that the country's 670,000 creative economy businesses had collectively lost at least \$150 billion by August 2020 (and have continued to lose revenue at the same rate). At the height of the pandemic, 63% of all creative workers were unemployed, and the sector unemployment rate continues to be 5-6 times the national average.

In Massachusetts, the creative economy is big business and needs federal recovery funding. Before the pandemic, it generated \$25.5 billion comprising 4.3% of the gross state product and encompassing 16,157 creative businesses, which employed 142,578 workers. At the height of the pandemic, 61% of creative workers were unemployed in Massachusetts. Overall, the state's

creative businesses have lost at least \$4.6 billion to the pandemic, and 45% of creative workers in Massachusetts now have no savings with which to jumpstart their own recovery.

The Cape Cod Chamber and other signatory chambers recognize that there can be no full recovery without the creative economy and are calling for Congress to support dedicated recovery funding because they know that creative product drives tourism, travel, hospitality, local small business, and social and economic health.

The Cape Cod Chamber supports the integration of the following core funding and policy recommendations into the forthcoming American Jobs Plan, which echo the [Put Creative Workers to Work](#) policy platform endorsed by over 2,300 creative businesses and creative workers in all 50 states:

- Allocate \$14 billion to incentivize local, state, and tribal businesses and governments to put creative workers to work addressing social, cultural, and physical infrastructure needs.
- Allocate \$3 billion to spark an American cultural renaissance through creative jobs, fellowships, residencies, and commissions.
- Allocate \$1 billion in arts and creativity-based education for recovery to incentivize retention of arts educators and improve the education infrastructure.
- Direct the Federal Reserve to broaden their nonprofit lending facility under the Main Street Lending Program to specifically benefit mid-size nonprofits.

“Cape Cod has been a leader in the state in the percentage of residents employed and engaged in the creative economy,” stated Wendy Northcross, chamber chief executive. “The pandemic, has impacted everyone, but has been extremely challenging for our cultural institutions and small, artisan businesses, so it’s a natural for our chamber to join this call to action for recovery support.”

In addition to Congressional leaders, the letter has been shared with the House and Senate representatives for all signatories and senior leaders in the White House. To support efforts to dedicate funds to creative economic recovery, visit <http://www.creativeworkers.net> to send a letter to Congressional representatives, share resources on social media, join the growing coalition of partners, and access other resources.

The Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce is a membership organization whose mission is to strengthen and promote the regional economic vitality, cultural richness, environmental sensitivity, and social needs of Cape Cod.