

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Reed II
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kirstin Gillibrand
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Katko
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Joseph Morelle
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Schumer, Senator Gillibrand, Representative Reed, Representative Katko and Representative Morelle,

Impact from the COVID-19 pandemic on the nine-county Finger Lakes region which is comprised of Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates Counties, has and will continue to have far-reaching economic detriment from the loss of jobs, tax revenue, and businesses. Rebuilding and reimagining the tourism industry is critical to the Finger Lakes regional economic ecosystem and financial health. As tourism and economic development leaders in the Finger Lakes region, we seek your support in obtaining federal CARES Act grant funding to aid in the recovery and resiliency of our region as a result of the devastation caused by COVID-19.

Tourism is a significant economic driver representing an industry of more than **\$1.7 BILLION** in the Finger Lakes region, while also serving as one of the largest industries statewide for employment. The industry is comprised of museums and cultural institutions; outdoor recreation; entertainment venues; restaurants and bars; wineries, breweries and distilleries; lodging properties; airports and transportation providers; meetings, conventions and sporting events; and destination marketing organizations.

\$1.7
Billion

Economic Impact

32,905
Jobs

\$210
Million

Local and State Taxes

As reported by Tourism Economics in 2018*, the nine-county region employed a total of **32,905** tourism and hospitality workers.

	DIRECT	TOTAL (DIRECT, IND., INDUCED)	SHARE (DIRECT)	SHARE (TOTAL)
GENESEE	1,921	2,730	8.3%	11.7%
LIVINGSTON	955	1,358	4.7%	6.7%
MONROE	14,037	19,949	3.6%	5.2%
ONTARIO	3,204	4,553	6.1%	8.6%
ORLEANS	385	547	3.1%	4.4%
SENECA	767	1,090	6.1%	8.7%
WAYNE	666	947	2.4%	3.4%
WYOMING	659	937	4.9%	7.0%
YATES	559	794	8.0%	11.3%
TOTAL	23,153	32,905	5.24%	7.44%

*Please note that all economic figures relative to the region are provided by New York State through Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics company. They are released approximately 6-8 months after the close of the prior calendar year, therefore 2018 represents the most recent data available.

Tourism generates more than \$210,000,000 in local and state taxes through the collection of sales and bed tax, and has a direct impact on every single household in the nine-county region. The average household in the Finger Lakes region would have to pay an additional \$452 to maintain the same level of government revenue.

	LOCAL TAXES	STATE TAXES	TOTAL	TAX SAVINGS PER HOUSEHOLD
GENESEE	\$7,047,278	\$5,612,086	\$12,659,364	\$529
LIVINGSTON	\$3,516,808	\$3,120,445	\$6,637,253	\$272
MONROE	\$78,956,555	\$58,568,256	\$137,524,811	\$458
ONTARIO	\$14,786,332	\$11,902,121	\$26,688,453	\$603
ORLEANS	\$1,816,629	\$1,573,320	\$3,389,949	\$209
SENECA	\$4,222,720	\$3,565,498	\$7,788,218	\$575
WAYNE	\$2,522,539	\$2,370,849	\$4,893,388	\$134
WYOMING	\$3,059,400	\$2,705,401	\$5,764,801	\$368
YATES	\$4,905,715	\$3,681,560	\$8,587,275	\$920
TOTAL	\$120,833,976	\$93,099,536	\$213,933,512	\$452

Nationally, the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry has been nine times greater than that of 9/11 and the industry as a whole is anticipating a 45% decline in revenue for 2020. Per U.S. Travel, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in over \$157 billion in cumulative losses for the U.S. travel economy. Anticipated loss of visitor spending to the Finger Lakes region during the period of March 15 – June 15 is expected to top \$425,000,000.

**\$425
Million**

**Anticipated Losses
March 15 – June 15**

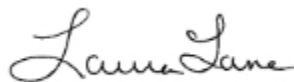
The nine-county Finger Lakes region is seeking \$600,000 in EDA CARES Act funding to implement a **Business Development and Sustainability Program**. As a technical assistance and stabilization program, it will support local and regional job creation and growth, and economic diversification strategies targeting affected workers and businesses, while also promoting the region through a travel and tourism-related marketing campaign to drive recovery through visitation. This benefits a broad spectrum of business sectors with a primary focus on tourism, hospitality and recreation, while also helping the growth and enhancement of cultural and natural assets. This program will be open to all businesses located in communities across the nine-county footprint of the Finger Lakes with a focus on existing and new start-up tourism and recreation operations. The focus primarily consists of tourism and hospitality industry businesses; attractions including but not limited to hotels and outdoor recreation; food, beverage and agriculture; arts and cultural institutions; retail establishments; and restaurants and food service businesses.

As such staunch supporters of New York State tourism in the past, we thank you for your continued support. With the assistance of funding through the CARES Act and through thoughtful and strategic collaboration, we are confident that we can drive critical support to the tourism and hospitality industry and businesses in our region who need it most.

Respectfully,



Tom Turnbull
President
Genesee County Chamber



Laura Lane
President & CEO
Livingston County Chamber



Don Jeffries
President & CEO
Visit Rochester

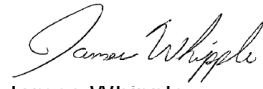
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Diana Keating
Director of Tourism Programs
Visit Rochester



Michael Manikowski
Economic Developer
Ontario County



James Whipple
CEO & CFO
Orleans County IDA



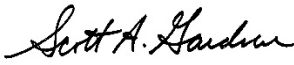
Dawn Borchert
Tourism Director
Orleans County Chamber



Jeff Shipley
President & CEO
Seneca County Chamber




Christine Worth
Director of Tourism
Wayne County Chamber



Scott Gardner
President & CEO
Wyoming County Chamber



Eric Szucs
Director of Tourism & Marketing
Wyoming County Chamber



James Pierce
President
Wyoming County Business Center



Lisa Burns
Executive Director
Finger Lakes Regional Tourism
Council



David Zorn
Executive Director
Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional
Planning Council

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