

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 23, 2021

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Wyden and Ranking Member Crapo:

The motorcoach, school bus, and passenger vessel industries have been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these companies are still struggling to get back to business as normal as the coronavirus is still limiting travel and entertainment opportunities. The December 2020 COVID relief package through the Coronavirus Economic Relief for Transportation Services (CERTS) Act provided invaluable support to these industries and their workers. However, when this provision was enacted, it failed to afford grants under the CERTS program the same tax treatment as other pandemic business assistance programs.

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG), and the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF) grants were all made non-taxable while all related business expenses remain fully deductible. However, the CERTS Act grants are taxable. We know that the Senate Finance Committee would have worked to provide similar tax treatment for this program if the matter was brought to the Committee's attention at the time. These funds were intended to be emergency relief and should be treated the same as other coronavirus relief funds, which are exempt from tax while related business expenses remain deductible. This clarification would help simplify tax compliance for these industries, many of which are small and family businesses, as well as provide parity with other industries hard hit by the pandemic.

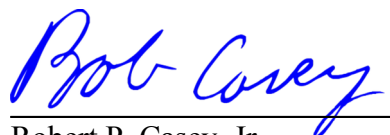
These industries provide essential transportation services to the public and need to remain in business. These businesses were some of the first to shut down in 2020 and will be among the last to fully recover. The CERTS Act grants, while extremely beneficial, only replaced about twenty percent of lost revenue from 2020. With the Delta variant leading many commuters and travelers to continue to stay at home, the economic impacts on these industries will be prolonged. Many operators do not expect to return to "normal" business until sometime in 2023. Requiring these struggling businesses to pay back a large portion of these emergency grants in taxes will further delay their recovery.

Thank you for your time and attention to helping these hard-hit industries recover from the pandemic by exempting CERTS grant funding from taxable income on the same terms as similar programs. We look forward to working with you to fix this inequity.

Sincerely,




Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



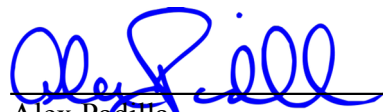
Mike Rounds
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Roy Blunt
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Roger Wicker
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Deb Fischer
United States Senator



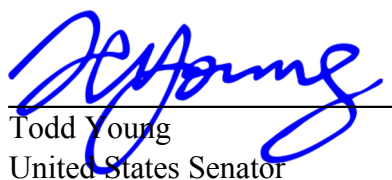
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



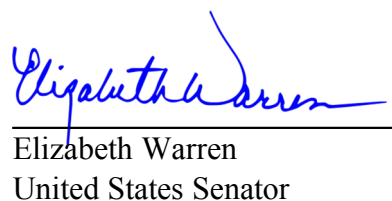
Bill Hagerty
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



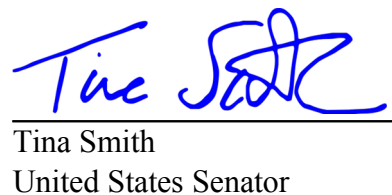
Todd Young
United States Senator



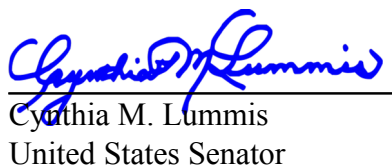
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



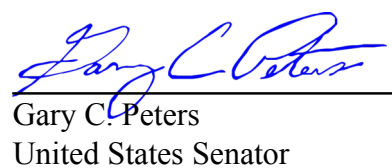
Thom Tillis
United States Senator



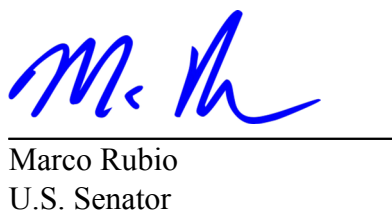
Tina Smith
United States Senator



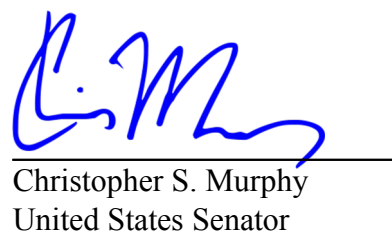
Cynthia M. Lummis
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



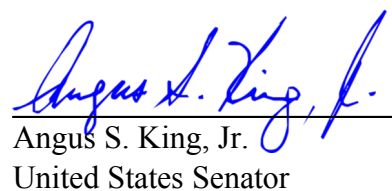
Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



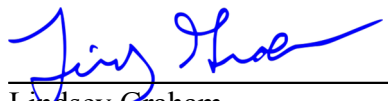
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



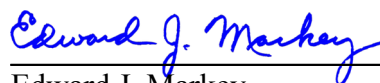
Richard Burr
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Lindsey Graham
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator




Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



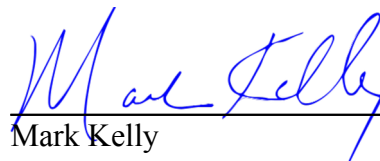
Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



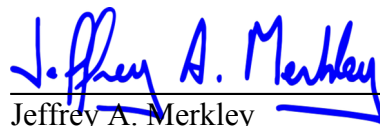
Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Chris Coons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" and last name "Coons" clearly distinguishable.

Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator