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Dear Senator (or Representative)

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As Congress considers additional legislation to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on economic recovery and stimulus, it is imperative that the legislation ensures that not-for-profit fair organizations and their for profit partners are eligible to participate, not unlike airlines, cruise lines, hotels or others in the travel or hospitality industry sectors. In fact, it may take some very directed language to create critical support for our unique organizations and the functions they perform.

Government announcements mandating travel restrictions, curfews, limitations on crowd sizes and closing of certain events have forced cancellations of agricultural fairs across the country, as well as the many events held at their facilities. The Western Fairs Association sister association, International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE), has received reports in from just 310 fairs (a third of fairs who are members of IAFE), that is over 10,600 events which would have generated over \$68 million to these community organizations. Those figures are just through mid-May based upon CDC guidance of halting mass gatherings. With the news out this week that community mitigation strategies may be implemented through August, the impact will rise into the billions.

Largely descendent from activities to promote and support agricultural communities or the celebration of ethnic heritage transplanted to our country, there are almost 2,100 local, county, regional or state fairs conducted in the U.S. every year. Almost all of these fairs are not-for-profit organizations (some, like in California, are agencies of state government) that operate and maintain fairgrounds, arenas, exhibition halls and other infrastructure. These facilities are maintained and utilized throughout the year providing emergency staging facilities for utilities during weather events and serving as fire camps and emergency shelter for people and animals in times of fire and hurricanes. In almost every area, these fairgrounds facilities are THE economic, social and cultural hub of the community. We are only in the early stages of this crisis and already we know that county fairs in three states have been asked to serve as drive-through testing locations and another is operating as an emergency command center in one of the hardest hit parts of California.

But the full impact of an agricultural fair is the annual event! The county fair, state fair, or regional ag show may last just three days or may stretch to a month, but each fair takes a year and for many larger fairs, multi-year planning and coordination to be successful. **Rescheduling is virtually impossible given the schedule of all the exhibitors, vendors, midway operations, and performers, and the schedules of other fairs.** According to IAFE analysis and records, 2,092 U.S fairs generate revenues of \$4.67 billion each year.

The Western Fairs Association (WFA) represents over 700 members western in the United States, including 140 fairs, and 560 Service and Affiliate Members that include carnivals, vendors, exhibitors, virtually every entity it takes to make up a fair. The vast majority of our members are small family businesses, many in their second and third generation of ownership. Months of cancelled events is a devastating blow to these employees and their families. To survive this situation caused both by a severe health crisis and government actions, both fairs and the businesses that give create the essence of the fair are going to need specific and targeted government help to survive and recover. Thank you for your attention to this emergency.

Sincerely,

<<INSERT YOUR NAME>>

<<TITLE>>

<<BUSINESS NAME>>