

# Ask Congress to Expand Relief Funding for EE Providers

Dear EE Friends & Advocates,

Right now, Congress is negotiating a new stimulus package designed in large part to extend and build on provisions in the recently passed CARES Act that support small businesses, including nonprofits. We know that many Affiliates and EE providers sought loans under the payroll protection and economic injury disaster programs funded under the CARES Act. Some were successful, but many ran into challenges, such as finding a lender to take their application before funds ran out last week.

**We have a narrow window of opportunity RIGHT NOW to ask Congress for improvements to the CARES Act to address these challenges, including some additional provisions to support program providers through the end of 2020.**

**Specifically, we ask that Congress:**

**Expand and improve access to payroll protection and other relief funding:**

- Extend the PPP through 2020 and incentivize lenders to prioritize processing of applications for small nonprofits
- Include provisions for covering salaries if/when partial reopening allows for some programming to resume at a greatly reduced scale to allow for proper social distancing and other health and safety issues
- Subsidize private residential education programs and other nonformal education and recreation programs (outdoor schools, residential camps, etc) that may not be able to operate at all for the remainder of 2020

**Strengthen charitable giving incentives**

- Expand the universal charitable deduction provision in the CARES Act by removing the \$300 cap and retroactively apply this to charitable donations made between March 13 and before the new July 16 deadline for filing 2019 taxes

**Business interruption coverage**

- Consider legislation to mandate business interruption policies cover COVID related claims and that the federal government would reimburse 100% of claims

**Please, call your Senators and Representative today to ask that they support the above provisions.** You may need to leave a recorded message. Alternatively, if you have a relationship with a staffer in your representatives' offices, feel free to send an email.

This information is also summarized in a [one pager \(link is external\)](#) that you can access and share.

**EE Talking points:**

- Environmental education associations and providers are among the millions of nonprofits and small businesses who have shuttered programs across the country as a result of coronavirus closures

- They are losing revenue and struggling to maintain staffing and operations without the ability to run physical programs or events
- Nevertheless, these educators are working hard to continue supporting schools, communities, and families with online resources and distance learning, continuing to provide high quality education and connection to nature through virtual experiences, teacher professional development, curriculum, and so much more
- Many caregivers will be returning to work this summer and will need safe, small group size child care often provided through summer camps and educational programming
- Small program providers struggled to access relief funding under the CARES Act because they didn't have an existing relationship with a lender, were asking for sums too small for banks to bother with, or simply were unable to submit an application before funding ran out
- Many of these nonformal education programs are small nonprofits that rely heavily on charitable donations to sustain their work

**NOTE:** To the extent you are able, **personalize these talking points based on your organization**—programs at risk, population you serve, how you've pivoted to online programming, and what your experience (if any) accessing relief funding has been.

**Sample telephone or email script** (consider linking to [this one pager\(link is external\)](#) in an email or online contact form; you can also send it as a follow up to a phone call if you're asked for a written request):

*Hi, my name is [name] and I am [role] with [org] in [city, state]. I am calling with an urgent request for [Representative or Senator name] as s/he considers ways to build on the CARES Act. My organization is currently unable to provide our normal environmental education program for schools/families/the public due to social distancing guidelines and school closures. I am asking [Representative or Senator name] to do the following:*

- *Extend the payroll protection program through the end of the year and incentivize lenders to prioritize processing applications for small nonprofits Include provisions for covering salaries if and when partial reopening allows for some programming to resume but at a greatly reduced scale to allow for proper social distancing and other health and safety issues*
- *Subsidize private residential education programs and other nonformal education and recreation programs (outdoor schools, residential camps, etc) that may not be able to operate at all for the remainder of 2020 Expand the universal charitable deduction provision in the CARES Act by removing the \$300 cap and retroactively apply this to donations made before the new deadline for filing 2019 taxes*
- *Consider legislation to mandate business interruption policies cover COVID related claims that the federal government would reimburse*

*Can someone please follow up with me regarding this request? Thank you.*