

**NATIONAL INDEPENDENT VENUE ASSOCIATION (NIVA)  
APPLAUDS BI-PARTISAN RELIEF BILL  
SAVE OUR STAGES ACT WILL ASSIST INDEPENDENT VENUES DURING THE PANDEMIC**

Senators Cornyn and Klobuchar  
Come Together To Save An Industry

July 22, 2020 -- The National Independent Venue Association (NIVA) applauds the introduction of the bi-partisan [Save Our Stages Act](#) introduced by Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) and Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

“Our members told us months ago that if the shutdown lasted six months or longer and there wasn’t federal relief to hold them over, 90% of them would fold permanently,” said Dayna Frank, president of NIVA and CEO First Avenue Productions. “With no revenue and immense overhead, four months in, it’s already happening. The warning light is flashing red and our only hope is for legislation like Save Our Stages Act or RESTART Act to be passed before Congress goes on August recess. Otherwise, most businesses in this industry will collapse.”

“On behalf of our more than 2,000 member venues, promoters and festivals, as well as their employees, artists and local communities who are facing an existential crisis as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we’re incredibly grateful to Senators Cornyn and Klobuchar,” said Adam Hartke, co-chair of NIVA’s Advocacy Committee and president of Hartke Presents. “While existing government assistance programs have helped other industries, they weren’t tailored to meet the needs of small businesses like ours that have zero revenue, enormous overhead and no visibility into when we can fully re-open. The Save Our Stages Act will provide the assistance we need to get through the shutdown until we can reopen safely and once again become the economic generators for our communities that we’ve always been.” A Chicago study last year showed that for every \$1 spent on a ticket at a local venue, \$12 of economic activity was generated for area businesses such as restaurants, retailers, and hotels.

Through [SaveOurStages.com](#), more than 1 million emails have been sent letting all 538 members of Congress know that constituents want to keep independent venues alive.

The *Save Our Stages Act* would provide Small Business Administration grants for independent live music venue operators affected by COVID-19 stay-at-home orders. These grants would provide at least six months of financial support to keep venues afloat, pay employees, and preserve a critical economic sector for communities across America.

“Texas is home to a number of historic and world-class small entertainment venues, many of which remain shuttered after being the first businesses to close,” said Sen. Cornyn. “The culture around Texas dance halls and live music has shaped generations, and this legislation would give them the resources to reopen their doors and continue educating and inspiring Texans beyond the coronavirus pandemic.”

“Minnesota’s concert halls, theatres, and places of entertainment, like First Avenue in Minneapolis, where Prince famously performed, have inspired generations with the best of local music, art, and education,” Sen. Klobuchar said. “This legislation would help ensure that small entertainment venues can continue to operate, and serve our communities for generations to come.”

**Background:**

Independent live music and entertainment venues have been hard-hit during the coronavirus pandemic, with 90 percent of venue owners, promoters, and bookers reporting they are at risk of closing permanently without additional financial assistance. If ticket sales do not resume until 2021, the industry will have lost an estimated \$9 billion in ticket sales alone. The *Save Our Stages Act*:

- Establishes a \$10 billion grant program for live venue operators, promoters, producers and talent representatives
- Directs the Small Business Administrator to make grants to eligible recipients equal to the lesser of either 45% of gross revenue from 2019 or \$12 million
- Allows the Small Business Administrator to issue supplemental grants in the future if funding remains available and applicants can demonstrate continued need
- Permits recipients to use grants for costs incurred during the COVID pandemic
- Permits recipients to use grants for rent, utilities, mortgage obligations, PPE procurement, payments to contractors, regular maintenance, administrative costs, taxes, operating leases, and capital expenditures related to meeting state, local, or federal social distancing guidelines
- The *Save Our Stages Act* is endorsed by (NIVA) and the National Independent Talent Organization (NITO).

**About NIVA:** Formed at the onset of the COVID-19 shutdown, the National Independent Venue Association (NIVA), now represents more than 2,000 members in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. These independent venues and promoters were the first to close and will be the last to fully reopen. NIVA's mission is to preserve and nurture the ecosystem of independent live music venues, promoters and festivals throughout the United States.

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