

National Independent Venue Association Applauds Amendment to the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Provisions

March 4, 2021— The National Independent Venue Association (NIVA) enthusiastically supports Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer’s Amendment to the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) provisions and supports its passage in the upcoming COVID Relief Bill.

The previous language forbade eligible entities to apply for both the Payroll Protection Program (PPP2) after Dec. 27, 2020 and the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG, f.k.a. Save Our Stages Act). If the revised provision becomes law, it will enable eligible entities to apply for PPP2 starting then until March 31, 2021, and also seek SVOG when the applications are made available by the Small Business Administration. The SBA has yet to set a date to accept SVOG applications.

NIVA members, devastated by having no income and enormous overhead for nearly a year, have been anxiously awaiting the SVOG application forms; many venues have gone under while waiting to access this program.

The PPP2 money can help eligible independent venues and promoters to hold on until SVOG funding starts being distributed. Any amount of PPP2 money taken by a recipient will be reduced from SVOG funds, i.e., if a venue is eligible for \$100,000 SVOG and they have taken \$25,000 in PPP2 funds, their SVOG cannot exceed \$75,000.

“This change can save countless venues from bankruptcy, as the immediate PPP2 money will help them hold on until the SVOG funds flow,” said Dayna Frank, NIVA Board President and CEO of First Avenue Productions in Minneapolis. “This entire industry is grateful to Majority Leader Senator Schumer for spearheading this provision and Senators Cornyn and Klobuchar for championing our cause with the Save Our Stages Act.”

Other important additions to the provision are an additional \$1.25 billion added to the SVOG fund and \$840,000 earmarked for the SBA staff to facilitate COVID-related programs. “The quicker the SBA can staff up and roll out this program, the better. To say our members are frantic and anxious is an understatement. The eviction notices have been coming at an even faster pace as time goes by without this emergency relief,” said Frank.

ABOUT NIVA

Formed at the onset of the COVID-19 shutdown, the National Independent Venue Association (NIVA), now represents more than 3,000 members in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. NIVA created and led the #SaveOurStages campaign, resulting in landmark legislation establishing the “Shuttered Venue Operators” Grant program to be administered by the Small Business Administration. NIVA’s mission is to preserve and nurture the ecosystem of independent live venues, promoters and festivals throughout the United States. The National Independent Venue Foundation (NIVF) was founded to further this mission by also seeking to support a transparent, competitive marketplace serving a diverse and inclusive community of artists, fans, and industry workers. The NIVA Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) is a tax-deductible way for individuals, companies, and foundations to contribute. The NIVA ERF directly supports the preservation of the independent live entertainment ecosystem that presents music, comedy, and the performing arts, helping these critical spaces survive through the Coronavirus pandemic. Individuals, foundations, businesses, and organizations that are interested in contributing to the NIVA Emergency Relief Fund should visit nivassoc.org/erf.

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