

United States Senate

April 22, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to address the needs of the American people during the COVID-19 crisis. We write to ask that forthcoming COVID-19 relief legislation allow state-legal cannabis small businesses and indirect marijuana small businesses to access emergency loan and grant programs administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). Access to the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program will allow these small businesses to keep their workers on payroll and prevent further job losses that are devastating the economy. The coronavirus crisis demands relief for all workers and businesses, no matter the sector.

The cannabis industry supports more than 240,000 workers in the United States, spanning 33 states and the District of Columbia. Some of these jobs have already been lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic crisis, and there is significant risk of greater job loss in the coming months. Many cannabis businesses are small-to-medium size operators, and some have been ordered to close to comply with state public health safety measures without having access to the same support systems in place as other small businesses in different sectors.

SBA's current regulations exclude small businesses with "direct" or "indirect" products or services that aid the use, growth, enhancement, or other development of cannabis from SBA-backed financing, including PPP and EIDL. Consequently, small business owners in states with some form of legal cannabis must choose between remaining eligible for SBA loan programs, or doing business with or in a rapidly-growing and legal industry.

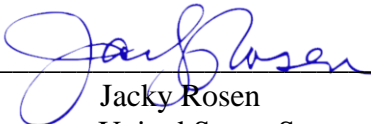
Workers at state-legal cannabis small businesses are no different from workers at any other small business—they show up to work every day, perform their duties, and most importantly, work to provide for their families. This lack of access to SBA assistance for cannabis small businesses will undoubtedly lead to unnecessary layoffs, reduced hours, pay cuts, and furloughs for the workers who need support the most. The COVID-19 outbreak is no time to permit outdated federal policy to stand in the way of the reality that state-legal cannabis small businesses are sources of economic growth and financial stability for thousands of workers and families.

Given the nature of the global COVID-19 pandemic, we must ensure that every American small business has the capacity to protect the health and economic wellbeing of their community and workforce. Therefore, we ask Senate Leadership to include in any future relief package


provisions to allow state-legal cannabis small businesses and the small businesses who work with this industry to access the critical SBA support they need during these challenging and unprecedented times.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.


Sincerely,




Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



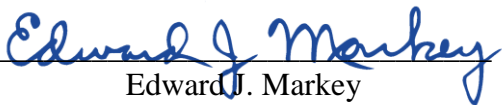
Ron Wyden
United States Senator




Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



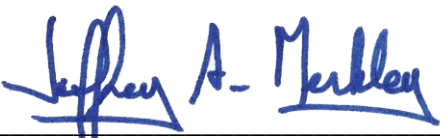
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



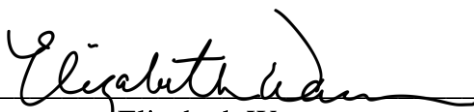
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator




Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator




Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator