Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

Thank you for your leadership in fighting for our nation’s workers as our country responds to these unprecedented health and economic challenges.

As you know, as a key part of the CARES Act, Congress set up an unprecedented forgivable loan program, the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), to aid small businesses and nonprofits in retaining their workforce and ensure they can weather this crisis. However, while faith-based nonprofit institutions and other 501(c)(3) nonprofits are among the beneficiaries of the program, 501(c)(5) organizations, like labor unions, were excluded, despite the critical role they and their members will play in overcoming—and recovering from—this crisis.

The exclusion of labor unions is a serious impediment to achieving the main goal of the CARES Act—to help workers weather the economic effects of the crisis. In January 2020, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that unions represented 14.6 million hard-working Americans. Now, staggering numbers of union members who work in critical industries have been thrown into financial insecurity as company after company has furloughed or laid off millions of workers. Compounding those layoffs, the severity of the coronavirus’ economic disruption has threatened the financial viability of many labor unions as their workers are laid off or furloughed causing dramatic declines in the union member dues that sustain their operations and staff.

It is especially critical at this time that the organizations fighting for America’s workers have equal access to the recovery funds made possible by the CARES Act. While unions hit hard by the crisis were excluded, large corporations can benefit from exceptions in the CARES Act that allow them to receive forgivable PPP loans meant for small businesses.

Congress must ensure labor unions can continue to do the crucial work of representing and fighting for rights of workers. Unions and their members will be crucial actors in our economic recovery, and we urge you to include them as eligible entities for federal support in programs like the PPP. Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you on legislation to contain the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus and strengthen our economy, our workers, and our families.

Sincerely,

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress
Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Gerry E. Connolly
Member of Congress

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress

Andy Kim
Member of Congress

Mark Pocan
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress

Andy Levin
Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress

Deb Haaland
Member of Congress

Eliot Engel
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

Dan Kildee
Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

Jesús G. “Chuy” García
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress

Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney
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Marc Veasey
Member of Congress

Madeleine Dean
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Tim Ryan
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Pramila Jayapal
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