



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

April 13, 2020

The Honorable Richard Durbin
525 South 8th Street
Springfield, IL 62703

Dear Senator Durbin,

On behalf of our 85 staff in the northeastern Illinois region, and the 39,000 occupational safety and health professionals we support nationwide, we are reaching out to voice concern that provisions to support 501(c)(6) professional associations are largely missing from coronavirus-related federal stimulus bills passed to date.

The American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP), a 501(c)(6) professional association, provides vital education, standards and advocacy to our members, who are responsible for protecting the health and safety of America's workforce. Our home office resides in Park Ridge, IL.

ASSP is one of the nearly 2,000 membership organizations in Chicago and the state of Illinois that contribute more than \$22 billion in global economic impact. These associations control more than \$8 billion in meetings and convention expenditures and employ more than 47,000 association professionals, with annual collective salary budgets exceeding \$3 billion.

While the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides relief for individuals, small businesses, corporations, hospitals, state and local governments, and 501(c)(3) nonprofit groups, **it does little to assist professional associations experiencing severe revenue losses during the current crisis.** Many associations have had to cancel large meetings, tradeshow, and other in-person events due to the pandemic, and others are experiencing the same operational shortfalls that have befallen large and small businesses in recent weeks.

While section 501(c)(6) organizations can access certain aid through the employee retention tax credit (Section 2301) and the Small Business Administration's expanded Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL; Section 1110), **it will be challenging for members of our community to qualify for aid – particularly through Section 2301 – and secure the funds they need to avoid bankruptcy.** Moreover, statutory language for EIDLs is unclear in exactly how it treats associations. We are also alarmed that **the CARES Act does not provide professional and trade associations with access to the Paycheck Protection Program.** Countless associations are in dire need of these funds for their economic survival – and their members now, more than ever, rely on associations for critical support during these unprecedented times.



Working together for a safer, stronger future.® | assp.org



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

We appreciate your consideration of the above concerns and consider specific provisions for our important industry in future legislation. Associations are an integral component of the civil society that underpins our democracy, and our organization and the members we represent are no different.

Best regards,

Diana Stegall, CSP, ARM
ASSP President





AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

