

April 21, 2020

Dear small business owners and chamber leaders,

Every hour of every day, small business owners and small chambers across the country are being forced to make difficult decisions due to the significant revenue disruptions caused by the coronavirus. Federal funds remain uncertain, forcing small employers to rely on a patchwork of financial support. Understanding that every dollar counts, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation yesterday opened a fund to provide \$5,000 grants to small employers, meeting our charitable mission by focusing on economically vulnerable communities.

We apologize for the technical problems and understand the frustration many of you experienced in attempting to apply for a grant. That should not have happened. Despite preparation for significant traffic, demand overwhelmed the system. We received more than 15,000 applications in minutes and, while we will begin awarding grants this week based on existing donations, we are no longer able to accept applications. Those who did submit an application will be notified if it results in a grant.

We wish we could help everyone who needs it.

This extreme level of demand underscores the stark pain in every community. Charities like our Foundation can and will support small employers in many ways – including financial assistance where possible – but it will not be enough. The need for federal funds is more urgent than ever, and those funds must be swift, accessible, and inclusive of the small chambers that are essential to local communities. As part of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s “Save Small Business” initiative, we are committed to helping small employers navigate the next days and weeks and reopen the economy safely.

The U.S. Chamber’s [website](#) will continue to provide updates on the status of federal assistance programs, such as the Paycheck Protection Program, as well as guides to help small businesses apply for and receive assistance.

On behalf of the entire Foundation, please know our team is working hard on this and other programs to help businesses of all sizes get through this unprecedented crisis. Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Cawley  
President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation