

March 25, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
U.S. Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned trade associations, we write to express our strong support for the inclusion of S. 3533, the *Securing and Enabling Commerce Using Remote and Electronic Notarization Act (SECURE Notarization Act)*, in the legislative package from Congress intended to address the economic fallout from COVID-19. This bipartisan legislation, introduced by Sens. Cramer (R-ND) and Warner (D-VA) is needed to immediately provide real estate transaction alternatives for consumers. A companion bill will soon be introduced in the House.

Remote Online Notarization (RON) laws allow businesses and consumers the ability to execute critical documents using two-way audiovisual communication. Current requirements for a signer to physically be in the presence of a Notary are antiquated and unnecessary in a time of heightened awareness and social distancing. Twenty-three states have already recognized the benefits of RON technology and passed legislation, while many more are currently considering similar proposals.

Given the dramatic adjustments businesses have had to make during the COVID-19 outbreak, the federal government has the opportunity to provide critical tools so they can continue operations. The *SECURE Notarization Act* would allow for the immediate nationwide use of RON technology. The legislation provides certainty for interstate recognition of RON and establishes minimum standards to ensure strong consumer protections. Current or future state laws meeting the national minimum standards will supersede this federal law. This will allow Americans the ability to complete real estate and loan transactions without having to gather at a closing table and risk contracting or spreading COVID-19.

The sale and transfer of real estate in the U.S. is a major economic driver that creates financial stability. Additionally, at current mortgage rates, refinancing will immediately save Americans money, precisely at the time when many homeowners are facing serious financial challenges related to the pandemic. We urge you to support the industry and consumers by passing the *SECURE Notarization Act*, in any stimulus package.

Sincerely,

American Council of Life Insurers
American Financial Services Association
American Land Title Association (ALTA)
California Association of REALTORS®
The Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers

Electronic Signatures and Records Association.
Independent Community Bankers of America
Mortgage Bankers Association
National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals (NAHREP)
National Association of Homebuilders
National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors
National Association of REALTORS®
Property Records Industry Alliance

cc: U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary