

March 16, 2021

Charlie Oppler
2021 President

Bob Goldberg
Chief Executive Officer

The Honorable Ben Cardin
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Small
Business and Entrepreneurship
703 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rand Paul
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Small
Business and Entrepreneurship
167 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC, 20510

ADVOCACY GROUP

Shannon McGahn
Chief Advocacy Officer

Dear Chair Cardin and Ranking Member Paul:

On behalf of the 1.4 million members of the National Association of REALTORS®, thank you for holding this hearing, “The Paycheck Protection Program: Performance, Impact, and Next Steps.” Congress acted quickly in 2020 to pass the CARES Act, which created critical relief programs for small businesses that were forced to close or reduce operations due to the pandemic, and it has since acted to reauthorize and improve those programs. As the pandemic goes on, Congress must continue to protect these critical economic drivers and other businesses at risk.

Although small businesses remain in danger in the wake of COVID-19, they have been bolstered by the Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and Economic Injury Disaster Loans. PPP loans have provided crucial assistance to numerous entities impacted by the pandemic, allowing them to keep employees paid and meet other debt and financial obligations. NAR was pleased that Congress reauthorized and provided new funding for the PPP in the two recent COVID-19 relief packages, as this allows new borrowers to access these loans and makes second-draw loans available to the hardest-hit small businesses. However, the deadline for applying for a loan has not been extended past March 31, 2021 – a date that is quickly approaching. At such a crucial juncture for small businesses and with a return to normalcy on the horizon, it is critical that Congress not prematurely cut-off aid that may make the difference between a business remaining open or having to permanently close. For these reasons, NAR supports the “PPP Extension Act of 2021,” sponsored by Senators Collins, Cardin and Shaheen, which extends the PPP application deadline through May 31, and gives lenders an additional 30 days to process new applications.

NAR also appreciates the steps taken by the Biden Administration to improve the PPP, including the two-week period during which only the smallest businesses could apply and the changes to the loan amount calculations for independent contractors, sole proprietors, and the self-employed. These changes increase the equity of the program, giving more flexibility to potential borrowers that may have had difficulty accessing



the loans earlier on, and also better reflect the actual income of the "Schedule C filers" category. The loan calculation updates are only available to new Schedule C filer applicants, meaning many who already received loans got less than they would now be eligible for. Congress should amend the program to allow those early participants to receive the difference in the loan amount they might now be eligible for, instead of unnecessarily penalizing them simply because they already received their loans.

Again, thank you for holding this important hearing. We look forward to continuing to work with you to help small businesses survive this crisis and lead in our nation's economic recovery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charlie Oppler", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Charlie Oppler
2021 President, National Association of REALTORS®

cc: U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship