

Date

The Honorable Holly Mitchell  
Senate Budget Committee, Chair  
California State Senate  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting  
Assembly Budget Committee, Chair  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: Emergency Funding for the California Fairs Network

Dear Chair Mitchell and Chair Ting:

As a private citizen and community member of [REDACTED] I write to urge your support for the California Fairs network as you deliberate the state budget in the upcoming weeks.

As we are all experiencing, Governor Newsom issued a statewide stay-at-home order and social distancing policies in response to the Covid-19 outbreak. Most recently on April 14<sup>th</sup> the governor announced six key indicators that will guide decisions as to how California will lift the stay-at-home order and reopen the economy. Newsom stated that there would be no large-scale mass gatherings like sporting events, fairs or concerts until there is a vaccine and/or herd immunity. This could be months away or longer, which means that mass gatherings like annual fairs and other large events are not going to happen any time soon.

Fairgrounds in California are self-funded, earning the revenue needed to support operations, promote community events and maintain the facilities and grounds from presenting the annual fair and serving as an event center for the community. The aforementioned governmental actions have literally eliminated California fairgrounds' ability to earn revenue. This has put all California fairgrounds in jeopardy.

The Network of California Fairs represents 76 fairgrounds that annually serve more than 35 million Californians in all 58 counties. Fairgrounds are often the heartbeat of their community, generating over \$35 million in nonprofit and community benefits and promoting a quality of life serving as gathering spots, recreation facilities and learning centers. Fairgrounds in California preserve 30,000 jobs and generate more than \$3.5 billion in annual economic impact while contributing over \$200 million in tax revenue to local and state government.

In addition, Fairgrounds are an essential part of the infrastructure necessary for the state to effectively respond in natural disasters and emergencies. During wildfires, floods and earthquakes Fairgrounds stage emergency vehicles and fire equipment, shelter displaced residents and animals, and generally support the community efforts to cope with each emergency.

To date, as a result of the stay-at-home order and response to Covid-19, more than 32 Fairs in California have canceled. More are expected to make that same decision in the coming weeks. Educational, entertainment and family events that are important to the communities are also canceled. Events that preserve our traditions and heritage; events that bring neighbors together in celebration; events that memorialize significant family events such as quinceaneras, weddings, funerals; events that promote local economy and commerce; events that are the very fabric of community wellbeing are all canceled. The financial hardship is extreme and felt by our fairs, the employees and also vendors, concessionaires, entertainers, local businesses, exhibitors, carnivals, service providers, hotels and nonprofits who rely on our fairgrounds and the Network of California Fairs to survive.

I respectfully request your help during these unprecedented challenging times by appropriating \$300 million in the 2020-21 State Budget as emergency assistance to the Network of California Fairs. Without this level of support, many fairs will close. In fact, several fairs are scheduled to run out of funds and will be unable to pay their employees within the next 30 days.

The fair in my community has always been there to add to the quality of life and assist us in so many ways. The Network of California Fairgrounds must be supported so in turn the citizens of California can enjoy the values and benefits provided by all that takes place on our fairgrounds. My community, my county depends on the fairgrounds to ensure a quality of life that is healthy, safe, inclusive, accessible and provides opportunity to all. I am optimistic that the future of fairs will strengthen and nurture communities that are currently hurting from the effects of Covid-19. Now is the time to provide emergency funding and preserve the legacy of the state's fairgrounds for future generations to come.

Thank you for supporting the fairs in California by appropriating emergency funding in the 2020-21 State Budget.

Sincerely,

Signature

Print Your Name

Address

Cc: Western Fairs Association  
California Fairs Alliance