

On Association Letterhead

<insert date>

<insert address of the Parliamentary Secretary for Region>

**RE: Support for COVID-19-related recovery funding for associations**

Dear <insert name of Parliamentary Secretary>,

I am writing as an executive of an association that will lose significant operation revenue as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We need your support and are calling for urgent assistance by delivering association resources through Canada's Regional Development Agencies.

Workers have been supported through the Canadian Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB) and businesses will be supported by tax deferrals and other small business supports through the Business Development Bank of Canada. There are no such benefits for the thousands of associations and not-for-profit organizations that span all sectors and professions in Canada.

Associations play a vital role in the Canadian economy. Over 600,000 meetings and events are held every year in Canada, generating over \$27 billion of GDP. Investments by associations in these activities support other hard-hit sectors, including hotels, convention centres, travel industries and event management organizations. The spin off effects are enormous across communities from coast-to-coast-to-coast.

March, April, May and June are some of the busiest months for association trade shows, conferences and Annual General Meetings. Associations rely on these events for critical revenue through sponsorships and conference fees. This year, having to cancel events, associations like mine will be on the hook for many thousands, and sometimes, millions of dollars.

The Canadian Society of Association Executives estimates that the immediate loss to associations due to COVID-19 is \$156 million in total revenue, with unanticipated affects yet to be known.

This lost revenue will force associations to further reduce staffing, scale back their activities and, in some cases, they will become insolvent. These situations are already occurring and we must act without delay to mitigate the damage.

Associations provide support that is critical to the recovery of Canada's economy and to our society at large as we adapt to a post-pandemic world. Professionals and tradespeople will need training and professional development, businesses will need conventions and trade shows to create new and lasting partnerships, and charities will need to innovate in fundraising and programming.

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We call on you to provide quick access to federal funds for associations that have lost revenue. The Regional Development Agencies could quickly support non-commercial activities that support innovation, business growth and social cohesion in the months to come.

I look forward to your response and encourage you to work closely with the Canadian Society of Association Executives to deliver a solution.

Sincerely,

Name

Position

Organization