



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Emma

Vaughn

April 19,

2021

Emma.Vaughn@mail.house.gov

Garbarino sends bipartisan letter to SBA urging grant access for Amusement Parks

Letter calls on U.S. Small Business Administration to allow amusement parks eligibility for the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) program

WASHINGTON – Today, Congressman Andrew Garbarino (NY-02) was joined by Reps. Tom Suozzi (NY-03), Chris Jacobs (NY-27), Joseph Morelle (NY-25), Jim Hagedorn (MN-01), and Lee Zeldin (NY-01) in calling on U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Isabel Guzman to expand Shutter Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) program eligibility to amusement parks.

“The amusement parks industry on Long Island is a main driver of travel and tourism, which has been devastated by COVID-19,” **said Rep. Garbarino.** “By expanding access to the SVOG program to amusement parks across the country, this funding would save thousands of jobs, revitalize local economies, and protect the small business that have become cultural institutions in their communities.”

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that due to COVID-19, industry wages fell by \$1.1 billion in Q2 of FY20 compared to Q2 of FY19. Peak employment fell by over 125,000 jobs this past summer as well. The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) estimates the effects of the pandemic will have cost \$23 billion in economic losses in 2020 alone. This is roughly a 45% average loss in earned income, which is coincidentally the maximum grant amount stipulated for SVOG recipients.

“Congressman Garbarino’s tireless efforts to ensure the future of our 60 year old family owned and operated amusement park shows his strong sense of community,” **said Steven Gentile, co-owner and President, Adventureland Amusement Park Steven Gentile.** “Congressman Garbarino and his constituents know how including our industry in the SVOG grant can be the much needed lifeline for our park, as well as the many other amusement parks who have lost 90% of their income in 2020. Supporting this letter and our industry’s inclusion in the SVOG grant means my family can continue to bring smiles and laughter to Long Island, as we have been doing for the past 6 decades.”

“We commend Representative Garbarino and the bipartisan group of Congressional leaders he has brought together to support the attractions industry which has been devastated by the Covid-19 pandemic closures. They are desperately in need of support from the SVOG program – which was established for this very purpose,” **stated Hal McEvoy, President and CEO, IAAPA, global association for the attractions industry.** Representative Garbarino’s efforts to work with Administrator Guzman to utilize her broad discretion to interpret the SVOG to include attractions businesses would go a long way in supporting this critical industry and the thousands of people whose livelihoods depend on it.”

“SVOG was created to help the entertainment industries that were forced to remain closed during the pandemic, but some were left off the eligibility list. This effort led by Rep. Garbarino will correct that omission and allow the attractions industry to get back on its feet again, preserving jobs and providing safe entertainment for guests,” **said David Oberlander, president of NEAAPA – The Northeast’s Entertainment Association, that represents amusement parks and attractions throughout the Northeastern United States.**

“I’m proud to lead this bipartisan effort on behalf of the amusement parks industry, both on Long Island and across the country, to secure funding these community treasures so desperately need,” **said Garbarino.**

Full text of the letter can be found [here](#).

###

Emma Vaughn

Communications Director

Rep. Andrew Garbarino (NY-2)

O: 202-226-3571/ C: 216-956-3779