



State of Rhode Island  
Office of Lieutenant Governor Daniel J. McKee

November 17, 2020

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo  
Governor of Rhode Island  
State House  
82 Smith Street, Providence, RI

Dear Governor Raimondo:

Enclosed is a letter from the Rhode Island Small Business Coalition to members of the Rhode Island General Assembly requesting support and collaboration with your administration on behalf of the small business community. My office has worked closely with the coalition to advocate for small businesses throughout this pandemic and I would like to bring their latest requests to your attention.

As Chair of Rhode Island's Small Business Advocacy Council, I strongly support the proposals outlined in the coalition's letter, including immediately allocating an additional \$75M in CARES Act funds to the Restore RI grant program and adding another \$75M if small businesses are ordered to shut down to stop the spread of the virus.

If we truly want to help small businesses in a meaningful way, we must act quickly to disburse remaining grant dollars and provide additional relief before the CARES Act funds expire on December 30, 2020. With new projections showing a significant reduction in the state budget deficit from \$900M down to just \$114M, allocating additional funds to small businesses is a reasonable and responsible thing to do.

I urge your administration to help small businesses survive and deal with the prospect of more challenging times ahead. Should your team need support from my office, please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel J. McKee".

Daniel J. McKee  
Lieutenant Governor

CC: Rhode Island Commerce Secretary Stefan Pryor



November 17, 2020

Dear Members of the Rhode Island General Assembly:

The Rhode Island Small Business Coalition urges you to step up and represent the small businesses in the communities you have been elected to serve. The General Assembly can and should start playing a significant role in helping small businesses navigate this pandemic and providing much-needed checks and balances with the Governor regarding a transparent allocation of the state's \$1.25B in CARES Act Funds.

As a grassroots coalition of thousands of local businesses from dozens of different industries, we strongly believe that our voices should be heard. The General Assembly must act swiftly and decisively to keep our small business community alive as the pandemic rages on. This second wave of the virus may result in a lockdown, which our small businesses do not have the cash flow to survive. Together, we are putting forth a list of urgent requests for you, our elected leaders in the legislative branch:

- **Hold Governor Raimondo's administration accountable and promote transparency**
  - Call for a weekly report on where the COVID-19 cases are coming from (*specific business industries, schools, social gatherings, etc.*)
  - Call for a weekly report on CARES Act fund allocation (*allocated and real spend*)
- **Support the immediate allocation of \$75M in CARES Act funds to the Restore RI Grant Program**
  - This should be used to provide additional rounds of grants to previous recipients through a simplified application and to provide grants those who have not applied
- **Support the allocation of an additional \$75M in CARES Act Funds to the Restore RI grant program if business lockdown goes into effect**
  - Increase the individual grant amount by basing the amount on fixed expenses (rent, insurance, utilities, etc.) in addition to number of employees
  - The grant should be open to all businesses under 100 employees, regardless of industry

These actions must be taken by the end of November as time is running out to spend the CARES Act funds before the December 30, 2020 deadline. Our economy will be forever changed if small businesses do not survive this pandemic. We need our elected leaders to do their part and ensure this does not happen. We thank you for your consideration and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Chris Parisi  
Co-Founder, RI Small Business Coalition