

April 20, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader and Minority Leader,

Thank you for your leadership in these trying times. As a coalition of over 400 youth sports organizations, we are calling upon your leadership to provide economic stability to the youth sports sector which has been dramatically disrupted by this crisis.

Youth sports offer a multitude of positive benefits to participants, including physical, social, emotional, and cognitive perks, that extend far beyond the playing field.

- Some 60 million youth in this country are registered participants in organized youth sports programs.¹
- Youth sports is an estimated \$19 billion industry.²
- Sports participation has a greater association with lower school dropout rates than any other activity.³
- Physically active adolescents are more likely to like to go to school, graduate from high school, and have a higher GPA.⁴
- Regular participation in sports can improve health factors and prevent obesity, chronic diseases, and other health problems.⁵

¹ National Council of Youth Sports. Sports Participation Data.

² <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2019/12/26/1964575/0/en/Youth-Sports-Market-Projected-to-Reach-77-6-Billion-by-2026-Comprehensive-Industry-Analysis-Insights.html>

³ Rosewater, A. (2009). *Learning to play and playing to learn: Organized sports and educational outcomes*.

Prepared for Team Up for Youth: Oakland, CA.

⁴ Barber, B.L., Stone, M.R., & Eccles, J. (2003). *Adolescent Participation in Organized Activities*. Washington, DC: ChildTrends.

⁵ Van Mechelen, W., Twisk, J., & Kemper, H. (2002). The Relationship Between Physical Activity and Physical Fitness in Youth and Cardiovascular Health Later on in Life. *International Journal of Sports Medicine*, 23, S1-S50.

- Youth who frequently attend afterschool programs, like sports programs, have less substance abuse, less misconduct, and are less aggressive than their peers who do not attend afterschool programs.⁶
- Underserved communities lack access to youth sports – In 2018, 33.4% of kids ages 6 -12 from homes with income of \$25,000 or less were physically inactive, compared to just 9.9% of kids from homes with income of \$100,000+.⁷
- Athletes learn resilience that is taught naturally through sport; specifically, in dealing with the *feelings* of personal loss, failure, adversity, and mistakes.⁸
- Physical inactivity impacts national security. According to the Pentagon, 27% of young Americans are too overweight to qualify for military service. This gap will only widen if sports are eliminated.⁹

As this crisis persists, the infrastructure of youth sports, from running programs, providing coaching, and hosting events and competitions is eroding. We must provide critical support now to the youth sports community so these programs can remain intact for our youth as the crisis wanes.

Youth Sports Economic Relief Fund

While not unique to youth sports, coronavirus-response-resulting cancelled youth sports programs have had a significant impact on the youth sports sector. This economic loss applies to the youth sport program providers, particularly sports based youth development programs serving underserved youth who need these opportunities the most, and youth sport event organizers, including the event hosts and a large number of employees and contractors connected to the events.

While the CARES Act funding made available to non-profits and businesses will be helpful in stabilizing youth sports organizations, additional assistance is needed. We are calling on you to help to address this economic and job destabilizing issue by creating an **economic stabilization fund of \$8.5B for youth sports providers.**

The Need for Funding:

- **Prolonged Program Closures.** The economic impact on youth sports will extend longer than many sectors of our economy. Unlike many sectors, youth sports are seeing a near complete shutdown. Youth sports, by its nature, are a group and crowd-generating activity. While other sectors can operate by remote operations and limiting contacts,

⁶ Reisner, E., Vandell, D.L., Pechman, E.M., Pierce, K.M., Brown, B.B., & Bolt, D. (2007). *Charting the benefits of high-quality after-school program experiences*. Policy Studies Associates, Inc.: Washington DC.

⁷ https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2019/10/2019_SOP_National_Final.pdf

⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2563797/>

⁹ Ready, Willing and Unfit to Serve. <http://cdn.missionreadiness.org/NATEE1109.pdf>. Accessed May 21, 2019

that is not feasible with youth sports. Procedures will need to be developed to safely allow the sports sectors to return to full operation, given the contact and crowd generating nature of youth sports. This could necessitate an extended period of shutdown across the youth sports industry before activities can resume.

- **Unique Structure.** Many youth sports organizations will not qualify for some of the protections under the CARES Act such as the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) because of the unique structure of how youth sports organizations operate. Youth sports organizations are largely run by volunteers, contractor and seasonal coaches, not employees. However, to support their workforce, youth sports programs still have operational costs including training, background screening, programmatic planning, and member support services. These costs continue even while youth sports programs remain closed.
- **Devastating Financial Losses.** Unlike other industries, under the current social distancing rules, youth sports are not happening and thus many youth sports organizations have seen their entire revenue stream stop, particularly their membership fees/dues which are essential to program operations. Furthermore, many youth sports programs, especially the nonprofits, are particularly reliant on corporate and philanthropic giving. Much of that support often comes from local restaurants and other businesses who are no longer able to give and probably will not be for quite some time.

In just the youth sports sector, we estimate that there have been approximately \$8.5B in losses due to coronavirus-response-related cancellations of youth sports programming, events, and clinics. A significant challenge to youth sports providers is that the force majeure clause of insurance contracts often does not cover pandemics. This means that most of the expenses related to cancelled youth sports programs and events are not reimbursable or insurable, leaving a potentially crippling loss. Similar losses are faced by venues scheduled to host these events that no longer can due to government restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic. The lost revenue will have a reverberating impact on airline, hotel, and transportation sectors while also hitting the economic impact of local tourism (e.g. restaurants, taxis/transportation, gig workers, facility rentals) resulting in further job erosion.

The Goals of the Fund

For these reasons, we are asking that Congress recognize this reality by extending existing CARES Act programs and creating a \$8.5B stabilization fund for the youth sports sector. Organizations that can demonstrate that national health guidelines prevent their return to programs, events, and general operations for an extended period will be able to apply for this funding to continue to provide the stabilization needed to keep their critical youth sports programs operational.

Youth sport providers can apply to be reimbursed for lost expenses from the coronavirus including loss of youth sports programming, camps and clinics, funding for employee and

contractual-related expenses needed to continue operations (beyond the allowable period of the CARES Act), and competition and event cancellations that are non-refundable or insurable due to the National Emergency nature of the cancellation.

This designated fund for youth sports providers will extend to all youth sports programs, organizations, and providers including sports-based youth development organizations, interscholastic sports programs, youth sports providers such as coaches, trainers, and instructors, and youth sport event providers. Priority consideration in the disbursement of these funds will be given to programs serving under-served communities.

Youth Sports Recovery Program

When Congress begins to start planning for our Nation’s recovery, there are specific efforts that should be included for youth sports. Youth sports will not be the same following this pandemic. We will need to adapt our policies, protocols, and even equipment to deal with this new reality. An investment in recovery should include an investment to ensure the safety and the quality of youth sports in this country.

In addition to the \$8.5B relief funding, Congress should create a youth sports recovery program, that will:

1. Create a Youth Sports COVID-19 Task Force to establish guidelines and protocols for the safe return and continuation of youth sports programs. This federal task force will include representatives of the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Housing and Urban Development, and Commerce, and key leaders in youth sports. The Task Force will develop youth sports policies, protocols, and practices to adapt to risks of contagions, such as the coronavirus, in youth sports settings, the adoption of those by youth sports organizations, and the purchasing of the necessary equipment, such as sanitation stations, needed to carry them out.
2. Fund existing grant programs along with funding new programs to support youth sports organizations and providers in implementing the new protocols of the Task Force. This will include, but is not limited to support to implement new policies, protocols, and practices, including the purchase of the equipment needed for implementation at practices and sporting events.

Conclusion

The youth sports sector plays a critical role in our economy and the development of our youth but has faced particularly severe consequences as a result of the coronavirus crisis and resulting National Emergency. For these reasons, crucial additional steps need to be taken to stabilize the industry and invest in recovery.

We, the undersigned organizations, support these recommendations and offer our expertise and support to work with you to execute this plan.

2D Sports
5 Tool Sports
6-4-3 DP Athletics
965 Midwest Challenge Tournaments
A World Fit For Kids!
A5 Volleyball Club, Inc.
AC Sports Group
Academy Volleyball Cleveland
Aces LLC
Active Policy Solutions
Adaptive Sports Program of Ohio
Adidas KIVA
Adrenaline Fundraising
Agency for Student Health Research
Air Capital Aces Volleyball Club
Al Veys Youth Sports Complex
Alabama State Games
Alaska USA Wrestling
All-Stars Youth Sports Club
Amateur Athletic Development
Amateur Athletic Union
America SCORES
American Baseball Coaches Association
American Baseball Holdings LLC
American Volleyball Coaches Association
Arizona Storm Elite VBC
Ascension Flight Soccer Club
Asheville Buncombe Youth Soccer Association
Athens Sandlot Baseball & Softball League
Athletx Sports Group
Atlanta Performance Volleyball
Atlantic Coast Baseball
Atlantic Coast Softball
Aurora Sports Officials
Austin Junior Volleyball
Babe Ruth League, Inc.
Badger Region Volleyball Association
BallN Prep Basketball
Ballpark Sports Baseball, Inc.
Barber Elite Soccer

Baseball Done Right LLC
Baseball For All
Baseball Youth
Batavia Soccer Club
Baton Rouge Soccer Club
Batters Box Training Center
Bay Area Women's Sports Initiative
Bay State Games
Bill Gray's Regional Iceplex
Birmingham United Soccer Association
Blue Sky Sports Center
Bluegrass Sports Commission
BoCo Volleyball Athletic Club, LLC
Brazas Futebol Club
Breakthrough Basketball LLC
Brit-Am Soccer Academy
Brookfield Civic Association
Bullpen Tournaments
BVB International Academy
CABA Colorado
CageRat Sports
California State Games
Campbell County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Candid Color Systems
Cap Classic Series
Capital City Juniors Volleyball Club
Carolina Cardinals Softball, LLC
Carolina Region of USA Volleyball
Central Ohio Cyclones Baseball Organization
Central Ohio Youth Baseball League
Champion Women
Chantilly Youth Association, Inc.
Chatham United Volleyball Club
Cheyenne Family YMCA
City of Steamboat Springs
Clifton Junior Athletic League, Inc.
Club Champions League
Club One AZ Volleyball
ClubCENTRAL Volleyball
CoachSafely Foundation
COAST College Recruitment
Collin County Baseball Academy
Colorado Altitude Girls Fastpitch
Colorado Juniors Volleyball Club

Colorado Rapids Youth Soccer Club
Colorado RoughRiders Baseball
Colorado Soccer Association
Colorado Springs Youth Sports
Colorado Youth Lacrosse Association
Columbia Empire Volleyball Association
Columbus Volleyball Center
Community Rowing, Inc.
Conklin Raiders Fastpitch
Connect Sports
Connecticut Baseball Club, Inc.
Connecticut Bombers Baseball
Connecticut Sports Management Group, Inc.
Courts Plus Community Fitness
Courtside Sports Center LLC
Crossroads Baseball Series
Crush South Volleyball Club
CTX Ability Sports
DaKine Warriors Volleyball Club
Dale City Track Club
Diamond Sports Promotions
Discover Floorball
Dive San Diego
Downstate Athletic Center
Downstate Juniors VBC
DREAM
DS Sports Ventures
Dublin Youth Sports
Dugout Northbrook Baseball/Softball Academy
El Pomar Youth Sports Park
Elite Athletic Training & Consulting LLC
Elite Tournaments
Elite Umpires Association
End of Trail Basketball
Enterprise Select Soccer Club
Equality League
EvenGame, Inc
Evolution Baseball LLC
EXCEL Volleyball Club LLC
eXplore Lawrence
Explore Nash County
Factory Athletics
Fastpitch Nation Indoor
Fastpitch Nation Park

Fight Club Volleyball Club
Fight For Children
Finesse Fastpitch Softball
Firecracker Sports, LLC
Firecrackers - Arizona Inc.
First Point Volleyball Foundation
Flag Football World Championship Tour
Florida Amateur Wrestling Association
Florida Region of USA Volleyball, Inc.
Fort Collins Area Swim Team
Fort Collins Baseball Club
Fort Collins Tigers
Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau
Front Range Volleyball Club Foundation
Front Range Volleyball Club, Inc.
Future Stars Tournaments, LLC
FVB Umpires Association
Game Day USA
Game On Infield Service Corp.
Garcia-parra Baseball Group
Garden Empire Volleyball Association
Girls in the Game
Girls on the Run International
GK Sports
Gold Crown Foundation
GRB Academy
Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association
Great Lakes Baseball League
Gulf Coast Region of USA Volleyball
Gym Kidz
Harvest Lacrosse
Higher Level Basketball, LLC
Hooligans Sports
HoopSource Basketball
Houston Juniors VBC
Houston Skyline
i9 Sports Corporation
Illini Elite Volleyball
Illinois Ability Sports
Illinois Officials Association
Integrity Basketball Academy, LLC
Integrity Sports Arena, LLC
International Society for Sports Psychiatry
Iowa Sports Foundation

Jackson 96ers Baseball Club
Jam On It Basketball Academy
JCC Association of North America
Johnson City Tennessee
Journeymen Wrestling Club, LTD
Junior Volleyball Association
KABOOM!
KC Power
Koa Sports League
Lake Tapps Volleyball Club
Laureus Sport for Good Foundation
Laxpalooza Lacrosse Tournaments, LLC
League of Fans
LeagueApps
Legacy Park Sports
Legacy Volleyball Club
Letofsky Sports Services
Leveling the Playing Field, Inc.
Limestone Volleyball Club
Lions Jrs Volleyball
Little League Baseball, Inc.
Louisiana Soccer Club
Louisville Lady Sluggers
Madfrog Volleyball
Main Event Sports
Martial Arts Industry Association
MAVA LLC
McDermott Sports, LLC
Metro Umpires Omaha
Michigan Elite Volleyball
Michigan Matcats Wrestling
Michigan Sports Alliance
Michigan USA Wrestling
MidAmerica Sports Center East
Midland Redskins
Midwest Basketball Tournaments
Midwest Speed
Millard United Sports
Minnesota Youth Athletic Services
Mintonette Sports
MS National Amateur Baseball Federation
Munciana Volleyball Club
Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
National Alliance for Youth Sports

National Amateur Baseball Federation
National Association for Health and Fitness
National Athletic Trainers' Association
National Center for Safety Initiatives
National Congress of State Games
National Council of Youth Sports
National PAL
National Travel Basketball Association
Nations Baseball Tournament Association, LLC
New England Baseball Enterprises
New Lenox Lightning
New Orleans Spartans Football Club
New Trier Feeder Baseball Association
New York - USA Wrestling
New York Wrestling Association for Youth
Next College Student Athlete
NorCal Premier Soccer
NorCal Valley Baseball
NORCO Juniors Volleyball Club
North Country Region - USA Volleyball
North Dakota USA Wrestling
NorthEast Ohio Baseball League
Northern Kentucky Junior Volleyball
Northern Kentucky Volleyball Club
Northern VA Travel Baseball League
Ohio Bombers Baseball
Ohio Elite Baseball
Ohio Prospects League
Oklahoma Soccer Association
Old Dominion Umpires Association
One Day Shootouts
ONE Softball
Open Gym Premier
Orange County Lady Elite Volleyball Club
Pacific AAU
Park City Chamber of Commerce/Convention and Visitors Bureau
Parker Warhawks Baseball Org
PeacePlayers
Pennsylvania USA Wrestling
Perfect Game
PGF Heartland LLC
Pinnacle Sports Productions
Pioneer Region of USA Volleyball
Pittsburgh Diamond Dawgs Baseball

Play 4 Fun Sports
PlayMSP
Playworks
PONY Baseball and Softball
Pop Warner Little Scholars
Power Alley Baseball Club
Premier Girls Fastpitch, Inc.
Premier West Baseball and Softball
Prep Baseball Report
Prep Baseball Report Tournaments
Prep Baseball Report Tournaments (KC)
PRIME Soccer Club
Privit
Prodigy Volleyball Club Director
Protect The Game
ProX - Grand Park
Rank One Sport & Rank One Health
Rawlings Tigers
RBI Louisville Inc.
React Fast, LLC
Real Athlete Academies
Real Volleyball Academy LLC
Rhode Island Thunder Gold LLC
Richmond Baseball Academy South LLC
Richmond Baseball Academy West
Richmond Volleyball Club
Rising Stars Sports Ranch
Rochester Accessible Adventures
Rochester NY Sports Commission
Rock Sports Group
Rocket City Volleyball Club
Roller Skating Association International
RSL - AZ South
RSL- AZ North
Saint Cloud Soar
Saint Vrain FC
San Diego Sol
SBD Tournaments
Schnecksville Playground Association
Scrap Yard Sports Complex
Share Winter Foundation
Sideout Sports
Slammers LLC
Snohomish County Sports Commission

SoCal Athletics, Inc.
Softball Youth
South Carolina USA Wrestling
South Mississippi Soccer Club
Southern Region of USA Volleyball
Sports & Fitness Industry Association
Sports and Social Change
Sports Endeavors, Inc.
Sports ETA
Sports Neuropsychology Society
Sports Performance Volleyball Club
Sportsplex USA of Santee, Inc.
Starlings Volleyball, USA
State 38 Basketball, LLC
State Basketball Championship
Steel Sports
Summit Lacrosse Ventures LLC
Sunflower State Games/Kansas Senior Games
Surf City Tourneys, Inc.
Tampa Mustangs
TBK Banks Sports Complex
Team 1 Events LLP
Team Connecticut Baseball, Inc.
Team Sports Tournaments
Teammate Basketball
Tech Team Wrestling Club
Texas Advantage Volleyball
Texas Glory Fastpitch
The Alliance of Social Workers in Sports
The Art of Coaching (Total Sports, LLC)
The City of Myrtle Beach
The City of North Myrtle Beach
The City of Steamboat Springs
The Farm Sports
The Female Athlete Network
The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau
The International Society for Sports Psychiatry
The Skills Center
The Squash and Education Alliance
The State Games of Oklahoma
The Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport
Thunder Academy
Thunder Baseball League
TiPEVO

Titans Baseball Inc.
Total Sports Complex
Trailblazers Volleyball Club
Training Legends LLC
Triangle Volleyball Club, Inc.
Triple Crown Sports
Triple Threat Camp
TropheCase
TSE Volleyball Club
TSS Photography
Turning Two Events Company LLC
Twin Peaks Youth Sports
U.S. All Star Federation for Club Cheer and Dance
U.S. Muaythai Federation
U.S. Soccer Foundation
Ultimate Baseball Academy
Union Volleyball Club, LLC
United Sports Association for Youth, Inc.
Up2Us Sports
US Lacrosse
US Sailing
US Sports Congress
US Squash
US Youth Volleyball League
USA Artistic Swimming
USA Cheer
USA Field Hockey
USA Football
USA Pentathlon Multisport
USA Preps
USA Roller Sports
USA Volleyball
USA Wrestling
USA Wrestling Arizona
USA Wrestling Utah
Varsity Spirit
VERSUS
Vestavia Hills Soccer Club
vFormity
Virginia Amateur Sports, Inc.
Virginia Beach Field Hockey
Vision Volleyball Club
Visit Aurora
Visit Edmond

Visit Fort Collins
Visit Franklin
Visit Kansas City
Visit Myrtle Beach
Visit Salt Lake
Volley One Academy Inc.
Warren County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Washington Angels
Washington State Wrestling Association
Wausau Central Wisconsin Sports Authority
WAVE Volleyball
Webster Soccer Association
WeCOACH
Willowbrook-Burr Ridge Sports Performance Center LLC
Wisconsin - Badger State Games
Woodside Sports Complex
Wrestle Like A Girl
Xtreme Dimensions Inc.
Xtreme Volleyball Academy
YMCA of the USA
Youth Baseball Nationals
Youth Runner Magazine
Youth Softball Nationals
Youth Sports Collaborative Network
Youth World Series
Yuma Wrestling Club