

November 9, 2020

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor DeSantis:

On behalf of the Alachua County Commission, I am writing in support of the independent performance venues in Alachua County, statewide, and nationally. These businesses are an essential part of Florida's creative economy and are particularly important to Alachua County's once thriving professional music and theater scene. These venues are key economic drivers that cater to both residents and visitors to our County and stimulate spending in neighboring businesses.

For most in this industry, the loss has been devastating. It appears, that for the foreseeable future, they will be closed or severely hindered from operating at profitable levels, due to safety concerns associated with COVID-19. Until the virus is under control there will be a lack of both the desire to congregate and the supply of professional talent to perform in these venues.

Federal PPP, local CARES Act dollars, and other assistance programs have been critical components in keeping these venues afloat, but more is needed to keep them from failing over the coming months. We ask that you support specific aid to these venues with current and future State allocated CARES Act dollars.

At the national level we ask that you lend your support to COVID-19 relief legislation that includes the bipartisan Save Our Stages Act, S. 4258 and H.R. 7806, which will give America's independent venues and promoters a fighting chance to survive. Doing so will assist tens of millions of unemployed workers, help small businesses, and uplift our communities.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting this effort.

Sincerely,