



We hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. As concerned citizens and theatre producers in Connecticut, we are writing to draw your attention to the critical situation faced by non-profit theatres in our state. We commend your tireless efforts in securing survival funds for theatres in Connecticut during the pandemic. Despite this critical support, the challenges theatres face in the post-pandemic era are proving to be formidable. Immediate action is needed to prevent their almost inevitable demise.

Consider the following:

Theatres were undeniably among the hardest-hit sectors during the shutdown that lasted over 18 months:

- Theatre operators eagerly anticipated the opportunity to raise the curtain and resume performances, only to be repeatedly thwarted by the resurgence of COVID-19 and its Delta and Omicron variants. This resulted in show cancellations and significant financial losses due to refunds and lost ticket revenues.
- According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the pandemic "broke the theatre-going habit." The return of patrons has not materialized as hoped, leading to a staggering decline in ticket sales of up to 50%. Box office sales account for approximately 80% of theatre revenue and cannot sustain these ongoing significant losses.
- This financial crisis has been further exacerbated by the need to pay higher wages to retain or attract new employees, along with substantial increases in supplies and materials costs.
- Many theatres have been forced to lay off employees and reduce their season lineups as a survival strategy. However, this approach does not facilitate the re-engagement of patrons, which is crucial for the long-term sustainability of these institutions.

It has become evident that reviving patron levels to pre-pandemic figures will require both time and financial support. Enclosed are surveys and news

articles demonstrating a consensus among theatre experts who estimate that the process may take four to five years.

To determine the necessary financial assistance, it is essential to consider the decline in ticket sales as a guiding factor. Non-profit theatres need targeted financial aid that takes into account the revenue gap created by reduced ticket sales, along with comprehensive support programs to - assist them in rebuilding their operations and reconnecting with their audiences.

While the \$16 billion allocated to the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) program was a vital lifeline during the pandemic, its impact will be greatly diminished if we fail to support the rebuilding process. According to the SBA, about \$14.5B was awarded, If the \$2B remaining could be apportioned to additional granting that would be a great place to start. (Of the 13,011 awards, about 9,000 were theatres.)

OUR ASK OF YOU: We urge you to champion the cause of non-profit theatres by actively seeking additional funding specifically earmarked for assisting these organizations in their post-pandemic recovery.

Time is of the essence, and recent history has demonstrated how quickly Congress can enact a bill by collaborating with other legislators to explore creative solutions such as tax incentives, loan forgiveness programs, and, most importantly, grants that are tailored to the unique needs of the theatre industry. By supporting these initiatives, we can ensure that the remarkable cultural contributions of non-profit theatres continue as a vibrant economic engine that provides employment opportunities for artists, technicians, supporting staff and suppliers, and enriches our communities.

In conclusion, we, the leaders of Connecticut's theatre community, implore you to prioritize the urgent financial support needed to enable non-profit theatres to continue the rebuilding process so they can thrive in the challenging post-pandemic landscape. Our state's rich arts and cultural scene depends on it, and the long-term benefits to our community and economy cannot be overstated.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We trust you will give it the serious consideration it deserves. Below are some of the non-profit

performing arts organizations that are in the same jeopardy and are signatories to this urgent request.

James Cooper

DocuSigned by:
James Cooper
8/12/2023

Consultant for CAFC

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Consultant for CAFC
8/7/2023

Carla Sullivan

DocuSigned by:
Carla Sullivan
8/10/2023

Crystal Theatre, Inc.

DocuSigned by:
Crystal Theatre, Inc.
8/8/2023

Cynthia Rider

DocuSigned by:
Cynthia Rider
8/6/2023

David Green

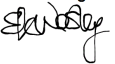
DocuSigned by:
David Green
8/5/2023

Eastbound Theatre


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Eastbound Theatre
8/7/2023

SIGNATORY PAGE

Erika K. Wesley

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Raymond G Michaud


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Greenwich Theatre Company - Kyle Silver

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Andrea Lynn Green

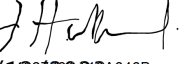
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Hugh Hallinan

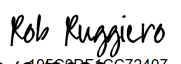
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Jacqui Hubbard

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Rob Ruggiero

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Marie Reynolds

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Marie Reynolds

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Lou Ursone

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Music Theatre of CT - Kevin Connors

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Music Theatre of CT - Kevin Connors

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Paige Miglio

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Paige Miglio

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Little Theatre of Manchester

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Little Theatre of Manchester

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Pamme Jones

DocuSigned by:

Pamme Jones

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Kit Ingui

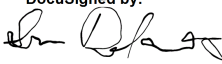
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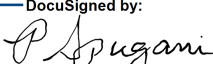
Seven Angels Theatre

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8/6/2023

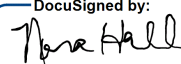
Square Foot Theatre Company - Jared Andrew Brown

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Square Foot Theatre Company - Jared Andrew Brown
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Town Players of New Canaan

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8/9/2023

Town Players of New Canaan

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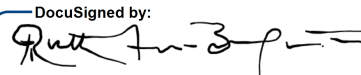
Wilton Playshop - Laura Ploss

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Wilton Playshop - Laura Ploss
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Westport Community Theatre - Sam Mink

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Westport Community Theatre - Sam Mink
8/8/2023

Ruth Anne Baumgartner - Westport Community Theater

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8/9/2023

David Byrd

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David Byrd
8/9/2023

Tracy Flater

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Tracy Flater
8/7/2023