(Date)

Governor Inslee,

There is an immediate and urgent need for additional financial assistance to small businesses in Washington State. (Suggested brief personal statement – who your organization represents or even a simple sentence, such as “As a concerned Washingtonian and resident of \_\_\_\_\_” or “As a small business owner myself…”) I am writing to support the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Federation of Independent Business’s request to **increase funding for the Working Washington Small Business Emergency Grant program to $50 million.**

The small businesses in my community are in desperate need of additional assistance, and fast. Data from a recent National Main Street Center [survey](https://www.mainstreet.org/blogs/national-main-street-center/2020/04/09/new-report-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-small-busines?CommunityKey=c40a84d1-46b2-465c-985c-c08ed69081ab&tab=) of small businesses highlights the bleak economic forecast, should policymakers hesitate to prioritize small businesses:

* Of the nation’s approximately 30 million small businesses, nearly 7.5 million may close permanently over the coming five months, and 3.5 million are at risk of closure in the next two months.
* Approximately 35.7 million Americans employed by small businesses appear to be at risk of unemployment.
* In Washington State, 91% of respondents reported loss of revenue and over 75% stated that employees are at risk of unemployment and/or layoff

NFIB survey [results](https://www.nfib.com/content/press-release/economy/covid-19-impact-on-small-business-part-3/) show similar trends, with half of small businesses unlikely to survive more than two months without assistance.

While loans from the federal CARES Act are slowly being deployed, there remain critical voids. Small businesses, especially those with 20 or fewer employees, need immediate assistance.

In addition to the critical increase in grant funds available through the Working Washington Small Business Emergency Grant program, we urge the Governor and Legislature to:

* Maintain criteria that eligible businesses are defined as those that have 10 or fewer employees
* Ensure that a minimum of 30% of grants are set aside for small businesses located in rural counties, where city- and county-wide financial resources are less common
* Ensure quick and easy access to funds to meet the needs of small businesses facing imminent, permanent closure

Small, independent businesses contribute in innumerable ways to Washington’s economy and Washingtonians’ sense of place and quality of life – making up 99 percent of all businesses and employing half the state’s private-sector workforce. Acting now to address the urgent needs these businesses are facing will help ensure that our communities are strong, resilient, and connected throughout the uncertainty of these challenging times.

Thank you for your consideration,

(Signature and signature line)