



## Oncology Nursing Society

125 Enterprise Drive • Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1214  
Toll Free: 866-257-4ONS • Phone: 412-859-6100 • Fax: 412-859-6165  
help.ons.org • www.ons.org

March 13, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader  
United State Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

The Honorable John Thune, Majority Whip  
United States Senate  
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Durbin, Minority Whip  
United States Senate  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Pat Toomey  
United States Senate  
248 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert Casey  
United States Senate  
393 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Potential Aid for Industries Impacted by Coronavirus

Dear Leader McConnell, Senator Schumer, Senator Thune, Senator Durbin, Senator Toomey and Senator Casey:

As Congress and the Administration consider federal intervention to support industries impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19), the Oncology Nursing Society urges you to include associations, nonprofits and other tax-exempt organizations within any federal aid packages or supplemental appropriations measures. Many professional nursing societies have been and will be harmed by event cancellations and reduced meeting attendance as a result of COVID-19.

Without the large revenue streams of for-profit businesses, we rely upon annual meetings and conferences to generate income for us to stay in operation. When events such as states of emergency occur to disrupt our operations and revenue generating events, our entire organizations are at risk.

I write to you on behalf of the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS), which represents more than 35,000 registered nurses and other healthcare providers dedicated to excellence in patient care, education, research, and

administration in oncology nursing. ONS members are a diverse group of professionals who represent a variety of professional roles, practice settings, and subspecialty practice areas. Oncology nurses are leaders in the healthcare arena, committed to continuous learning and leading the transformation of cancer care by advocating for high-quality care for people with cancer.

Many nursing and medical societies, including ONS, have made the difficult, albeit necessary, decision to cancel upcoming meetings and conferences to ensure the health and safety of front-line clinicians, staff, volunteers and the patients they serve, especially and most urgently the rapidly increasing number of patients suffering from COVID-19. ONS is confronted with myriad travel bans for our attendees, resulting in cancellations and enforced reduced attendance and curtailment and making it impossible to hold ONS's events. We are at the mercy of national and state emergency declarations that impose travel restrictions and large meeting bans, such as the March 13, 2020 order of Maryland Governor Hogan who banned all large in-state events of 250 or more attendees and the forthcoming national emergency declaration by President Trump.

The unavoidable cancellation of the 45th Annual ONS Congress, scheduled to take place in San Antonio, April 29-May 3, 2020, will result in a direct loss of significant annual revenue. As you know, there have been confirmed COVID-19 cases in San Antonio, which is hosting dozens of newly disembarked cruise ship passengers who may be suffering from COVID-19.

It is customary for a nonprofit to derive a significant percentage of its annual income from meetings and conferences. Additionally, cancellations result in a loss of income to the hospitality industry in the host city, which, for us, would have been San Antonio. Each year, approximately 4,000 ONS meeting attendees spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on hotels, restaurants, and entertainment during our annual conference. The loss of these numbers is devastating both for nonprofits and local economies when one considers the number of nonprofits who host hundreds of annual conferences each year. **Therefore, we urge you to include tax-exempt entities in any temporary aid designed to stem the economic fallout resulting from COVID-19.**

According to the Events Industry Council's 2018 Economic Significant Study conducted by Oxford Economics<sup>1</sup>, more than 1.9 million meetings occur in the United States each year – with more than 250 million attendees. These meetings contribute more than \$446 billion to U.S. gross domestic product and directly support 5.9 million jobs nationwide.

As you are aware, the fast-spreading COVID-19 outbreak has prompted the cancellation of soon to be hundreds of major meetings and events in the U.S.

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<sup>1</sup> Events Industry Council. Economic Significance of Meetings to the US Economy. February 2018. <https://devmeetingsmeanbusiness.pantheonsite.io/sites/default/files/Economic%20Significance%20of%20Meetings%20to%20the%20US%20Economy.pdf>

Additionally, associations operate as small businesses and are greatly impacted if employees are forced to take sick leave or are quarantined as a result of COVID-19 interaction in addition to the loss of revenue upon which we vitally depend for our continued operations. We are aware the Administration and Congress are considering measures for small businesses that may require cash flow assistance amid the outbreak and **urge that tax-exempt entities be included in any such temporary aid designed to stem the economic fallout and harm resulting from COVID-19.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura Fennimore".

Laura Fennimore, DNP, RN, NEA-BC  
President  
Oncology Nursing Society