

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Chairman DeFazio,
and Ranking Member Graves:

We are writing to express our support for the cruise industry and the hundreds of thousands of American workers it employs. The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has severely impacted the cruise industry, resulting in the voluntary decision by cruise lines to temporarily suspend operations on March 13. This suspension has closed a \$53 billion vital artery for the U.S. economy, which supports more than 421,000 American jobs, including many in our Florida districts.

The cruise industry plays a unique role in the American economy. Nearly 75 percent of cruise vacations are booked through travel agents, making the industry a critical portion of their business. The industry's broad national, interdependent supply chain of U.S. companies encompasses ports, travel agents, airlines, hotels, retail, and other goods and services. Taken together, its direct supply chain spend in the United States is \$11.7 billion annually.

The cruise industry also is an important contributor to seaports across the country. The industry pays many fees to ports, including berthing, security, customs and immigration, local harbor pilots, and other logistical services fees. At PortMiami, the cruise industry accounts for more than 60 percent of the port's income and the industry provides the port \$120 million a year for wharfage and dockage fees, as well as tens of millions annually in additional capital recovery fees and direct investments. The industry also supports the employment of International Longshoreman members.

At PortMiami, approximately 50 to 60 percent of total longshoremen hours come from work for cruise lines, totaling between 1.2 to 1.4 million paid hours per year.

Additionally, American shops, restaurants, tour operators, and suppliers rely heavily on the cruise industry, which accounted for \$17.61 billion in goods and services purchases and capital expenditures in 2018 alone. Expenditures by cruise passengers and crew members for transportation, accommodations, food, and other retail goods in the United States accounts for an additional \$4.67 billion in domestic economic activity. With homeport locations in Boston, New York, Norfolk, Charleston, Jacksonville, Canaveral, Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, San Juan, Tampa, Mobile, New Orleans, Galveston, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Seward, and Honolulu, the cruise industry is a major economic engine for communities across the nation.

The safety, health, and well-being of passengers, crew, and the global community are the cruise industry's number one priority. Any suggestion to the contrary is not fact-based. The cruise industry is strongly regulated, both at the international and federal levels, complying with stringent health, safety, and environmental requirements. Moreover, beyond regulatory requirements, the industry has invested heavily to reduce its carbon footprint. Currently, cruise lines are developing new and innovative practices, such as using liquefied natural gas (44 percent of new ships), shore-side power (88 percent of new ships) and advanced wastewater treatment systems (100 percent of new ships). All of these actions are being taken to reduce carbon emissions by 40 percent by 2030.

In closing, we are confident that the cruise industry is fully committed to the enhancement of passenger care, safety, security, and environmental stewardship. As one of the largest economic contributors to Florida's economy, we strongly oppose any efforts that would unfairly target or hurt this important industry and urge you to provide the same level of support to the workers in this industry that is being provided to every other American worker.

Sincerely,



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress

Vern Buchanan
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

Charlie Crist
Member of Congress

Ted Deutch
Member of Congress

Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress

Neal Dunn
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

Brian Mast
Member of Congress

Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress

Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Daniel Webster
Member of Congress