



**International  
Health, Racquet &  
Sportsclub Association**

**March 17, 2020**

Hon. Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate

Hon. Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives

Hon. Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate

Hon. Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives

**RE: Economic Relief from Impacts of COVID-19 for Health and Fitness Industry**

Dear Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Senator Schumer and Representative McCarthy:

My name is Joe Moore. I am President/CEO of the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA), the leader in education, research and advocacy for the health and fitness industry, representing health clubs and fitness businesses worldwide, as well as the 39,750 clubs and studios in the United States that service more than 64 million consumers.

As Congress has indicated that it will be working on a third economic relief package for businesses and industries impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, health clubs, studios and fitness equipment manufacturers must be included in any relief package afforded to other industries.

Health clubs and studios serve 64.2 million American consumers and generate \$32.3 billion in annual revenue. Despite these impressive numbers, many clubs and studios are in fact small businesses, disproportionately impacted by the disruption COVID-19 is causing to the economy. Like many industries in America, fitness businesses are not just large or small, and the relief needs to address all types of businesses.

Clubs and studios employ over 425,000 people. These businesses are made up of all different types of employees, incorporating full-time staff and non-traditional employees who must work to get paid. These jobs are at risk - many of them young people, first-time entrants into the job markets, women, minorities and independent contractors such as personal trainers.



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Clubs are deeply ingrained in their communities, purchasing local goods and services, paying local taxes, providing ancillary services to parents such as daycare, helping parents maintain their own health and offering tailored classes to specific individuals. Clubs in smaller communities serve as community resources, often providing the only facilities and services such as swimming pools, fitness equipment and swim lessons in that community.

As front line providers, it is also crucial that clubs and their suppliers need to be up and running and providing valuable services when the world returns to normal.

The health benefits of exercise are well documented and well known. Perhaps most important, given our current pandemic crisis, studies link physical activity to improvements in immune health. Exercise can boost the circulation of T cells and other immune cells that play critical roles in the body's defense against pathogens, such as COVID-19. Long-term moderate exercise programs have proven to lower incidence and duration of upper respiratory tract infections, with reductions as high as 40-50% among people who were active daily.

Now is not the time for America to lose one of its best preventative tools for reducing the impact of viruses and diseases such as Coronavirus 19. It is vitally important to the health of our nation that we maintain a strong health club and fitness industry, they are on the front lines of improving America's physical and fiscal health. It is for these reasons that health clubs, studios and fitness industry suppliers must be included in any COVID-19 economic relief package.

Thank you for your consideration. If I can provide you with any additional information on this matter or about the fitness industry, please do not hesitate to contact Jeff Perkins, assistant vice president of government relations, at [jdp@ihrsa.org](mailto:jdp@ihrsa.org), or by calling IHRSA at (617) 951-0055.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joe'.

Joe Moore  
President & CEO, IHRSA