December 2, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer Majority Leader U.S. Senate

Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell Republican Leader

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

Speaker

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy Republican Leader

U.S. Senate U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20510 Washington, DC 20515

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

On behalf of America’s more than 40,000 fitness facilities fighting to foster and strengthen Americans’ health and fitness, we urge you to pass direct aid for gyms and fitness facilities before the end of this year.

The damage done to America’s fitness facilities by COVID-19 has been devastating. As of July 1, COVID-induced closures have claimed 22 percent of fitness facilities in the U.S.—including 27 percent of studios—and 47 percent of the jobs in the industry, some 1.5 million jobs. Operators have suffered revenue losses of over $29.2 billion. These figures have undoubtedly increased since then, and we expect to see 2021 end with at least 25-30 percent of fitness facilities closed permanently.

The appearance of another COVID variant, coupled with discussions around reinstituting mask mandates and further restrictions to address the increase in COVID rates, demonstrates the ongoing struggle and uncertainty our industry faces heading into January and February, the two most important months of the year for fitness facilities. Aid is desperately needed to address the damage already done to these vulnerable businesses and to bolster them.

Gyms and fitness facilities, much like restaurants, were not simply indirectly harmed by the pandemic’s impact on the economy overall, but directly bore the brunt of government-mandated closures and restrictions. Like restaurants and live events venues, gyms have consistently been singled out for higher restrictions, a fact underscored by the reinstatement of indoor mask mandates in many cities and a handful of states across the country. Gyms suffer the same hardships, but have not received commensurate aid. Thousands of America’s small gyms and fitness facilities will not survive if we are left behind again.

In the interest of saving millions of jobs, tens of thousands of small businesses, and safeguarding the health and fitness of our country, we urge you to pass meaningful direct aid for gyms and fitness facilities before the end of the year.

Cc:

Senate Small Business Committee Chairman Ben Cardin

Senate Small Business Committee Ranking Member Rand Paul

House Small Business Committee Chairwoman Nydia Velazquez

House Small Business Committee Ranking Member Blaine Luetkemeyer