



July 8, 2020

Economic Development Administration
Philadelphia Regional Office
Robert N.C. Nix Federal Building
900 Market Street, Room 602
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear EDA Representative,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports Northern Virginia's joint grant application to the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) to address the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on our region's hospitality industry. The specific grant opportunity is FY 2020 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Funding Opportunity Number PWEAA2020.

In 2018, tourism generated more than \$10.2 billion in economic impact in Northern Virginia, supporting 91,000 jobs and generating \$638 million in state and local tax receipts through visitor spending. The COVID-19 pandemic has been catastrophic for the region, with a baseline scenario for 2020 showing losses of \$5.5 billion in visitor spending, 34,000 jobs, and \$345 million in state and local taxes, according to a study prepared for Virginia Tourism Corporation by Tourism Economics in May 2020.

Northern Virginia has proactively developed a regional response to address these severe economic challenges. The official destination marketing organizations (DMOs) of Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William will partner with Northern Virginia Community College and the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council on a program that combines travel/tourism marketing and hotel workforce training. The Marketing Component is designed to increase hotel stays, resulting in increased hotel employment and more visitor spending at local businesses. The Hotel Employee Training Component provides returning and unemployed workers with a training/certification program on new, post-COVID-19 health/safety/sanitation protocols.

This approach aligns with EDA's Recovery & Resilience and Workforce Development & Manufacturing investment priorities, and meets the EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance requirements to "prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus" and respond to "economic injury as a result of coronavirus." We encourage your support for Northern Virginia's grant application.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kate Bates".

Kate Bates
President & CEO