

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 16, 2022

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer:

I write to urge you to bring S. 4008, the *Small Business COVID Relief Act of 2022*, to the Senate floor as soon as possible for a vote. Small businesses form the backbone of many communities in Georgia, employing nearly half of all workers throughout the state. I worked with a bipartisan group of my colleagues to craft the legislation included in this bill to ensure that all small businesses in Georgia and across the country will continue to thrive. The Senate must act to prevent these small businesses from closing permanently due to rising costs, supply chain challenges, residual effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and other factors outside of their control by providing targeted relief to some of the hardest-hit industries.

There are about 1.1 million small businesses in Georgia that employ 1.7 million Georgians, comprising more than 99 percent of Georgia's businesses.¹ Small businesses were some of the hardest hit in our economy when first facing the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, while dealing with the uncertainty of how the pandemic will continue its course, they are also tackling rising costs caused by corporate greed, geopolitical conflict, and lingering supply chain logjams.

While thousands of Georgia's small businesses benefited from targeted aid provided by past federal COVID-19 relief packages, many were also either excluded from programs or unable to receive assistance before programs closed or funding ran out. For example, although the Restaurant Relief Fund, established by the American Rescue Act of 2021, provided needed relief to 2,674 restaurants throughout Georgia, there are 5,007 pending applications for funding that has already dried up.² At the same time, according to the Georgia Restaurant Association, more than 4,000 restaurants closed throughout the state during the pandemic, and another 3,000 may close by the end of the year.³

The bipartisan *Small Business COVID Relief Act of 2022* would bolster the small businesses hit hardest by the pandemic, including restaurants, gyms, and live venue service and support companies. Not only would the bill directly assist these industries by providing aid to small businesses, but it would also further protect the jobs and communities that they operate in. It would also include bipartisan legislation I authored with Senator Blackburn to aid small

¹ <https://cdn.advocacy.sba.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/30141858/Small-Business-Economic-Profile-GA.pdf>

² https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/RRF_Report-508.pdf

³ <https://www.cbs46.com/2022/04/19/historic-inflation-forcing-georgia-restaurants-raise-prices-close/>

businesses that support live events that have suffered significantly during COVID-19, as well as other legislation I have supported to aid restaurant and other venues that have been devastated by the loss of revenue due to the pandemic.

To have an economic recovery that works for all Georgians, and all Americans, we must ensure that our community's small businesses have adequate resources to succeed. By bringing the bipartisan *Small Business COVID Relief Act of 2022* to the Senate floor for a vote and working to pass the bill into law, we will be doing just that.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Warnock". The signature is stylized and includes a flourish at the end.

Reverend Raphael Warnock
United States Senator