



Speak Up for Main Street

Urge your Members of Congress to include \$100 million for Main Street coordinating programs, local technical assistance, and grants to small businesses for pandemic-related operational shifts.

How can you help?

1. Send a letter to your Congressional delegation via this [online form](#).

Take the next step: share the form!

- Email to your local board of directors, Main Street businesses, and organizational stakeholders.
 - Include in your Main Street newsletter.
 - Share via social media. Here's some suggested text:
 - Speak Up for Main Street! We are asking Congress to create a \$100M competitive grant program through EDA to help Main Streets survive COVID-19 & we need your voice. Use this link to send a message to Congress: ow.ly/opBc50ACZgT
2. Uncover and utilize connections to Senate and House offices.
 - Many Main Street programs have strong existing connections to Congressional offices, whether through a previous advocacy effort, partner networks in the district, or close personal connections. Now is a key time to find "grasstops" connections to offices.
 - Grasstops connections are people who have the ear of the Congressional office, such as a mayor with a close connection to a Senator or a board member who meets regularly with a District Director.
 - Reach out to your grasstops connections and ask the individual to help you elevate the Main Street proposal by arranging a call with the Member of Congress or their staff.
 - Remember: never underestimate a meeting with staff.
 3. Make the case for Main Street in a call with a Congressional office. Here's a call "script" to walk through key points:

Give Background:

- Introduce yourself and your Main Street organization.
- Give examples of the effectiveness of your program. Utilize your revitalization statistics!
- Talk about your organization's role in supporting small businesses during this crisis. Cite specific examples of projects or businesses helped.



- Explain your concerns for businesses, your local Main Street organization and your coordinating program.

Introduce the Proposal:

- We are seeking a \$100 million dollar competitive grant program through the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Economic Adjustment Assistance program (EAA).
- This COVID relief proposal would support Main Street coordinating programs that provide needed technical assistance and also small businesses for operational changes necessitated by the pandemic.
- *Please make sure to review [Talking Points](#) and a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) prior to the call to be prepared for questions.*

Reiterate the Need:

- Technical assistance provided by Main Street programs is essential to helping small businesses survive the pandemic.
- Local Main Street programs are funded primarily through business contributions, fundraising, and municipal support. All three sources of funding are threatened.
- Funding from other programs – specifically CARES Act Relief to States and Municipalities and CARES Act EDA funding – has broadly not made its way to small local revitalization programs.
- Using an existing nationwide network, funding to support downtowns and small businesses can be deployed efficiently.

Ask the Office for Support:

- Request that the Congressperson support this proposal in negotiations for the next COVID-19 response package.
- Ask them to express their support to Senate or House Leadership (as appropriate).
- Ask them to connect with their party staff lead on EDA appropriations.

4. Report back to Main Street America with any updates.

If you arrange a call with a Congressional office, please report back to Kelly Humrichouser at Main Street America (khumrichouser@savingplaces.org). Please include information on who you met with and any questions that you received.