

Fitness Industry, once again, Excluded from COVID Relief Bill

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WASHINGTON, DC, USA, December 21, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Congress is expected to pass a bipartisan COVID relief package today. In response, Brent Darden, interim President/CEO of IHRSA released the following statement:

"The most recent COVID relief package includes direct relief for the airline industry, direct relief for live events venues and theaters, and tax changes to benefit the restaurant industry but absolutely nothing for one of the hardest hit industries in the country – the fitness industry.

"It is absolutely incomprehensible that Congress would direct relief to other industries but leave gyms and fitness clubs out. For most of these industries, this relief will be the second round of aid from Washington, meanwhile some in the fitness industry are still waiting for the first round of assistance.

"Almost no industry has been hit as hard as the fitness industry. Gyms and fitness facilities were the first to close in the spring, the last to reopen, were saddled with the most stringent and costly reopening requirements and are now – once again – the first to close in this second wave shutdown.

"The economic impact on the industry is nothing short of devastating. IHRSA estimates that the U.S. health club industry lost \$17.2 billion from mid-March through December 1—losses that continue to accumulate.

"Since the beginning of the pandemic, 15% of gyms and fitness facilities have permanently closed and more than 500,000 jobs lost as of October 1. Without immediate targeted assistance, the closures will increase to 25% and hundreds of thousands of additional jobs will be lost. These massive closings would be catastrophic to the owners of these small businesses and their hundreds of thousands of employees.

"The fitness industry is an industry committed to the health of the American people. It is hard to believe that in the middle of a global pandemic that Congress wouldn't be interested in protecting an industry that is a critical part of our health care infrastructure."

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