

# Davis Introduces Bill to Extend COVID Grant Deadline for Independent Entertainment Venues

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Rodney Davis (R-IL) has introduced [H.R. 5429](#), the SOS Extension Act, with Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT) to extend the deadline of the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) created in the bipartisan Save Our Stages (SOS) Act. The SOS Extension Act, would extend the timeline for using SVOG funds from the end of 2021 to spring of 2023. "Many music venues and theaters have waited a long time for the SBA to distribute grant funds authorized by the Save Our Stages Act, but bureaucratic delays have slowed the process of getting funds out the door," said Rep. Davis. "With the grant program expiring in less than three months and the pandemic still negatively impacting their industry, it's important that we extend the program's deadline so venues can fully utilize the grant funding. I'll continue to work with colleagues in the House and Senate to get

this bill passed and on the president's desk before the end of the year so we can extend this important program." "We're grateful for Representative Davis's support, as we navigate as gathering places in the throes of this challenging time," said Rory O'Connor (Owner Castle Theatre Bloomington Illinois). "These grants truly have saved our businesses, and with added time, we'll be in the best position to maximize the use of taxpayers' funds responsibly, ensuring our ability to thrive, hire employees, and return as the economic engines of our communities. The bipartisan support for our independent businesses throughout this crisis has been overwhelming." The Save Our Stages Act, which Davis co-sponsored, was signed into law as part of the omnibus funding bill on Dec. 27, 2020. Given months-long delays from the SBA in launching this program and disbursing the grants, many venue owners are struggling to use their funding by the end of December, forcing them to spend grant funds in only three months while their venues remain shuttered or limited due to the pandemic. Unless this deadline is extended, venues could have to return billions of their grant dollars to the SBA. The bipartisan Save Our Stages Act:

- Narrowly defined eligibility to ensure only small shuttered and at-risk venues qualified for federal grant funding
- Directed the SBA to make grants to eligible venues equal to the lesser of either 45 percent of operation costs from calendar year 2019 or \$10 million
- Permitted recipients to use grants for essential expenses incurred during the COVID pandemic
- Permits recipients to use grants for rent, utilities, mortgage obligations, PPE procurement, payments to contractors, regular maintenance, administrative costs, state and local taxes, operating leases, and capital expenditures related to meeting state, local, or federal social distancing guidelines

The SOS Extension Act is being led in the U.S. Senate by Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN). This legislation is supported by the Association of Performing Arts Professionals, Broadway Across America, Coalition of Performing Arts Centers, League of American Orchestras, League of Historic American Theatres, National Association of Theater Owners, National Independent Talent Organization, National Independent Venue Association, Performing Arts Alliance, Performing Arts Managers and Agents Coalition, Preservation Hall Foundation, The Broadway League, and Theatre Communications Group.