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Gov. Evers: Announces $15 million in grants distributed to Wisconsin's live music and entertainment venues

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced that $15 million in COVID-19 Live Music and Entertainment Venue Grants has been awarded to 96 live venues. The grants aim to provide financial stabilization to Wisconsin's live entertainment and large meeting venues, which were among the first small businesses to feel dramatic negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We know large gatherings of people in small spaces can be a catalyst for spread, which is why our folks in the live music and entertainment industry have been doing their part to help keep their communities and people safe," said Gov. Evers. "These changes haven't been easy, but these venues have worked to be good partners throughout this process. We hope these funds can provide critical support and stabilization to help them get through until we can all gather safely and enjoy entertainment together again."

Funded by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and administered through the Department of Administration (DOA), the COVID-19 Live Music and Entertainment Venue Grant Program provides grant funding to live entertainment and large meeting venue operators whose facilities have been negatively affected by COVID-19. Grant awards provided eligible recipients up to $500,000 or 25% of 2019 ticket or event sales, whichever was less. Grants have been pro-rated due to oversubscription.

"These venues serve as community gathering places and vibrant hubs for culture, art and innovation; however, the continued effects of COVID-19 across the state means they may be the last to fully re-open," said DOA Secretary Joel Brennan.

“These grants will hopefully bring a little hope to this industry as we all continue to push for additional action at the federal level to allow them to survive until we can fully embrace live entertainment in a healthy and recovered Wisconsin.”

More information regarding the COVID-19 Live Music and Entertainment Venue Grant Program is available here. A full list of grant winners is available here.