

U.S. Rep. Steil: Leads 39 of his colleagues to urge small business administration to ensure religious organizations and religious nonprofits are eligible for coronavirus emergency assistance

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JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN—Congressman Bryan Steil (WI-01) urged Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Jovita Carranza, to ensure religious organizations and religious nonprofits are eligible for SBA loans to pay workers, rent, and utilities. 39 of Steil's colleagues joined to support this effort.

“Religious organizations and religious nonprofits provide important services to our communities. They also employ many workers who are feeling the negative impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. We must protect these workers and their jobs. The Small Business Administration must immediately make clear that religious organizations and religious nonprofits have the same access to federal assistance programs as any other small business. I will continue working with the Trump Administration to make this right,” **said Steil.**

“We are grateful to Congressman Steil for his leadership and action to ensure the Small Business Administration implements the Paycheck Protection Program fairly for all applicants. This virus and the economic fallout associated with it affects everyone, including houses of worship, religious schools, faith-based charities, and their employees. These loans are an essential lifeline to help faith-based organizations to stay afloat and continue serving those in need during this

crisis,” **said Lauren McCormack, Executive Director of Government Relations, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.**

In part, the letter reads: “We ask that you ensure that nonprofit organizations that support our communities in times of need can fully benefit from the Paycheck Protection Program. Specifically, we are writing to request that the Small Business Administration (SBA) provide religious nonprofits with full access to Paycheck Protection Program loans and loan forgiveness, despite their religious affiliation and activities.”

You can read Steil’s letter to Administrator Carranza below or [here](#).

Administrator Carranza,

Thank you for working diligently to address the ongoing coronavirus public health crisis. As you work to implement the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (P.L. 116-136), we ask that you ensure that nonprofit organizations that support our communities in times of need can fully benefit from the Paycheck Protection Program established in Section 1102 of the law.

Specifically, we are writing to request that the Small Business Administration (SBA) provide religious nonprofits with full access to Paycheck Protection Program loans and loan forgiveness, despite their religious affiliation and activities. We also ask that any religiously affiliated organization that receives a Paycheck Protection Program loan be permitted to continue to provide services to its community without restrictions on its religious practice, consistent with current law with respect to other forms of federal financial assistance.

Further, we ask that you clarify that entities that are affiliated with a religious institution, such as schools, day care centers, and adoption providers be treated as separate entities for the purposes of determining overall staffing levels. Failing to address this issue could cause religiously affiliated organizations across the country, such as community institutions that are affiliated with their local Catholic parish, to shut down as they lose access to this vital program.

Thank you again for your hard work throughout this public health crisis. We look forward to your response and we stand ready to work with you to address the needs of the American people during this challenging time.



Sincerely,

Bryan Steil