

Wisconsin theatre venues: Calling on Gov. Evers for support with funds from CARES act

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The Pabst Theater Group and many other Wisconsin venues call on Governor Evers to allocate dedicated money from the remaining funds provided from the CARES Act to support independent live entertainment venues in the state. Most venues have lost nearly 100% of their revenue since the pandemic forced them to close their doors in March. With their business depending on national artist tours (most postponed until 2021) and large-scale public gatherings, Wisconsin's live entertainment industry won't survive the pandemic without additional funding.

Citing the efforts of other states, including Oregon, Washington, Texas, Tennessee and, most impressively, Montana (offering substantial relief money through two generous grants for live entertainment venues and small businesses), Wisconsin venues are asking for similar support to preserve economies and the integrity of arts and culture in the state.

"We're staring down a harsh inevitability for venues like ours throughout the state if additional relief doesn't come soon," said Gary Witt, President & CEO of the Pabst Theater Group. "It's impossible for live entertainment venues to sustain the forced closure and prolonged loss of revenue we're facing. When our businesses close, our arts and culture scene will suffer, the \$250 million dollar contribution our group alone makes to Milwaukee's economy will disappear, Wisconsin's unemployment rate will surge and a segment of the economy will collapse."

Wisconsin's venues serve as revenue generators and modern day convention groups, attracting visitors like moths to the lights of their cities. **It is estimated that independent concert venues contribute over a billion dollars to Wisconsin's economy, helping to keep restaurants, bars, coffee shops, hotels and other retail thriving in our state.** Wisconsin's venues also **spend millions of dollars marketing events in their cities**, helping to build the soul and identity of their communities and the state.

Wisconsin's economy simply cannot restart without it's beloved venues. Community members are urged to visit <https://www.change.org/p/tony--evers-help-save-wisconsin-indie-venues-effected-by-covid-19> to sign a petition in support of local entertainment venues.