



November 28, 2020

Dear Fellow Marylander:

Like so many of our traditions this year, today, Small Business Saturday, will look a little different than it has in years past.

COVID-19 cases are surging nationwide, including here in Maryland, so I am urging you to be as safe as possible today as you support our local small businesses.

Our local small businesses need your support during this difficult time. So, if your favorite small business offers online sales or curbside pickup, please use those services as often as possible. If you physically visit a small business, please, wear a mask, use touchless payments if they are available, and follow social distancing measures to protect you, workers and other customers at the store. We are entering what many public health experts expect will be an especially difficult period of the pandemic.

As we all support the small businesses in our communities today, I want you to know that I am fighting for another COVID-19 relief bill that helps both our communities as well as our small businesses—because we're all in this together.

On Wednesday I published an op-ed in the *Baltimore Sun* calling on Republican leaders in Congress to put partisanship aside and sit down to negotiate a comprehensive relief bill, just like we did with the *CARES Act*, which passed the Senate 97-0 in March at the beginning of the pandemic.

Click [here](#) to read the full op-ed. A few highlights are below.

*"This is not a time for small measures. As part of a larger package, Congress must get serious about helping small businesses. We support our local communities in Maryland and across the country by supporting our small businesses, many of which are in desperate straits right now.*

...

*"We can help our small business by providing greater support for state and local governments. Small businesses need local services to remain stable.*

*We must provide support to schools so they can operate safely, whether it's in person, virtual or hybrid. We must support the more than 12 million Americans who remain unemployed, they are the customers who shop at small businesses. Most important, we need a national testing and tracing strategy, because small businesses will continue to struggle until the American people are confident it is safe to go out, shop, use services and fully participate in the economy.*

...

*"This pandemic is not going to disappear overnight, despite advances in vaccine research. Small businesses need more than the eight additional weeks of payroll assistance through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). As the lead Democrat on the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, I have introduced legislation to reopen PPP for small businesses that did not get to apply for an initial loan before the program closed on Aug. 8, and provide a second round of PPP for vulnerable small businesses.*

...

*"For the sake of the country let us sit down to negotiate a bipartisan comprehensive COVID-19 bill that will keep our communities safe, get Americans back to work and save small businesses."*

Small businesses are the lifeblood of our American economy – in Maryland and nationwide. Please support our local small businesses today, on Small Business Saturday, and throughout the year. Please, do it safely.

Stay well,



Ben Cardin