

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 06, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington D.C. 20500

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

As you consider legislative action to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, we urge you to provide temporary relief from federal permitting fees for ski areas. Rural mountain communities across the country rely on ski areas as major employers and drivers of economic activity and have been negatively impacted by the early closures of ski areas done in accordance with state stay-at-home policies.

We ask that you consider waiving ski area permit rental charges and permit fees from March 13, 2020 through June 1, 2021. As ski areas continue to work with the United States Forest Service (USFS) to respond to this crisis, Congress should consider waiving these fees authorized in federal statute. Ski areas are a critical part of this country's rural economy and Congress must protect them during this crisis.

Today, there are 122 ski areas operating on USFS lands across 14 states. They host approximately 33 million visitors annually, comprising 60 percent of total ski area visitation in the United States. For many rural mountain communities, ski areas are the largest employer and a main driver of local economic activity. Ski areas nationwide support over 964,000 jobs and drive seasonal demand for hotels, restaurants, retail stores, and small businesses in mountain communities.

As of mid-March, ski areas across the country closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 season to help stop the spread of the Coronavirus. These closures mean ski areas are not operating during their peak season that typically represents twenty-five percent of annual revenue. Ski areas summer operations, which represent on average eleven percent of annual revenue for ski areas, continue to be negatively impacted by this crisis. As this crisis continues, ski areas are facing a serious liquidity challenge and allowing ski areas to retain funds that would have otherwise been paid to the Treasury will help ski areas retain employees.

By waiving federal permitting fees through June 2021, Congress can help facilitate the recovery of ski areas during this critical time and help their operations maintain critical staff in preparation for summer months and the next winter sports season.

We very much appreciate your consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our offices if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Ann McLane Kuster



Scott Tipton

Also signed by:

Congressman Rob Bishop

Congressman Ed Perlmutter

Congressman Peter Welch

Congressman Tom McClintock

Congressman Chris Stewart

Congressman Chris Pappas

Congressman John Curtis