



NATURAL SCIENCE COLLECTIONS ALLIANCE

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October 19, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the Natural Science Collections Alliance (NSC Alliance), thank you for your leadership on our national response to the current COVID-19 epidemic.

As Congress considers the responses to the economic costs of COVID-19, we again request that you include in any economic recovery measure non-profit natural history museums, botanical gardens, and other scientific societies and research organizations which are an integral part of the nation's bioeconomy and serve as resources with respect to understanding animal/human pathogen interactions. We know from communication with our colleagues that many of our institutions and their staffs were helped by the previous relief measure. These scientific research and education organizations continue to suffer economic losses as a result of the need to cancel scientific meetings, workshops, and to reduce, postpone or cancel public programs, including educational programs associated with schools and other civic organizations. Recent surveys by the [American Association of Museums](#), and the [Biodiversity Collections Network](#) clearly document the issues facing this community.

Most natural history organizations are non-profits that operate on tight budgets with limited capacity to absorb abrupt and significant losses of revenue, such as that generated from public visitation and engagement in programs.

Scientific societies and organizations have been at the forefront of the public response to COVID-19. Often, cancelling programs to reduce exposure risks prior to any request or directive from government and public health officials.

The Natural Science Collections Alliance is a non-profit membership organization representing natural history museums, botanic gardens, and other scientific collections and the people that make, curate, and support these collections.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me at jbates@fieldmuseum.org if we can be of assistance on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bates". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "B".

John Bates, Ph.D.
President