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23 March 2020

Robert C. Angeli, President  
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P.O. Box 2052  
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Representative Connelly and Senators Kaine and Warner

I write you today with my concerns for self-employed independent contractors being supported by the Coronavirus Stimulus Relief Bill, currently under consideration.

I am the President of a fast pitch softball umpire association that assigns games for approximately 120 teams and 3 organizations around the Fairfax / Arlington / Alexandria / Washington DC. These are mainly middle, junior highs and high schools, but also includes non-profit organizations such as the Ft Hunt Youth Athletic Association, Northern Virginia Girls Softball League, Prince William Country Girls Softball League and McLean Little League in the Northern Virginia and Washington DC area. There are eighty-seven officials on my roster who are all available for assignments; those individuals live all across the national capital region from Washington DC as far south as Woodbridge, Virginia.

Between March 1, 2020 and June 1, 2020 we had over 550 games that had been assigned to umpires, with a minimum of two (and sometimes three) umpires per game. That's a minimum of 1100 umpire assignments. Averaging the local fees paid per umpire per game at \$97 and administrative fees, that's approximately \$149,000.

Due to federal guidelines and the cancellation of school for the remainder of the year order of Governor Northam and Mayor Bowser extending the DC school closure through April 24, 2020, to date, we have had to cancel nearly 90% of those 550 games. We have rookie umpires that start out nearly \$800 in the whole due to registration fee, insurance, uniforms and equipment. As independent contractors, they do not have a guaranteed income, vacation or sick time, nor health insurance from this work. Lost wages of independent contractors is a serious concern.

Beyond the lost wages, each one of these umpires has had to spend money to register with the Virginia High School League (VHSL) to be able to work high school games, many had 2019-2020 expectations to attend a VHSL clinic, take the certification test and travel to meetings plus uniform expenditures to prepare for the upcoming season, which seems all but lost now.

I implore you to give strong consideration to the financial support of independent Contractors as the House and Senate discuss and vote on the Coronavirus Stimulus Relief Bill. The numbers I gave represent only a handful of schools and under 100 officials for a single sport, softball. If you consider the full breadth of all officials across all sports the numbers are multiplied exponentially. Without officials, there are no sports. As Barry Mano, president of the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) stated, "...without sports officials, amateur sports cannot exist... Without us, all is recess. Without us, the rules are just ink on paper."

I thank you for your time and energies you give to support all the people you represent. May this letter serve as a reminder of a professional population that is often unseen and unrecognized. Please play your part in support the working officials that provide the structure and ability for youth and recreational sports across the country to exist.

Respectfully,

*Robert C. Angeli*

Robert C. Angeli  
President, Northern Virginia  
Softball Umpire Association