



9:30

ANTHEM



May 6, 2021

Dear Mayor Bowser:

We appreciate your leadership guiding the city during this once-in-a-century pandemic. We are writing to support your efforts on vaccine distribution, and to request once again the metrics required for the re-opening of our facilities at 100% capacity.

#### Vaccine Facilitation / Overcoming Vaccine Hesitance

We join together to offer our services to facilitate the administration of the vaccine program as expeditiously as possible. We share your vision of expedient, equitable, and widespread vaccine distribution. We stand ready to work with you to save lives and get D.C. back to work, school, commerce, and enjoyment of the entertainment that is the pride of the Nation's Capital.

Ours is one of the best prepared, best equipped, and most experienced industries in America to manage and control large crowds in a rapid, organized fashion. Our interiors have large, open footprints with bright work lights and empty standard refrigeration systems. We can also provide buses to transport medical workers to communities in need of vaccinations or bring residents to vaccination sites.

In addition, we can work with you to create public service events to inspire those reluctant to become vaccinated. This effort can include faith leaders, athletes from the Washington Capitals, the Washington Wizards, and the Washington Mystics, and our staff. We offer outreach to our customers through emails, digital billboards and signage on our buildings, and social media audiences. We can partner in the city's public awareness programs about the importance of vaccinations and opportunities for securing them.

#### Reopen DC Planning

We were pleased to be part of the broad coalition of organizations that participated in developing your Reopen DC plan. The diversity of input you assembled ensured a thoughtful and safe plan for the entire city.

The Reopen DC Plan Phase 4 provides for the **full and complete reopening of D.C. once a vaccine or treatment is widely available and administered**. We are all incredibly grateful that the FDA granted emergency approval to three separate vaccines and that the availability of the vaccines increased at a faster pace than originally predicted. We are thrilled that vaccines are now widely available and that all D.C. residents 16 years and older may receive the vaccine immediately at a walk up, no-appointment-needed D.C. vaccination site as well as by appointment through pharmacies, clinics, and health care providers throughout the city.

**As such, we propose that our organizations and venues be permitted to open at full capacity on July 1, 2021, which is two months after May 1, 2021.** May 1 is the date when everyone aged 16+ in D.C. was first able to go to a walk-up, no appointment needed vaccination sites in D.C. July 1 also makes sense for the entire DMV, since vaccines began to be widely available and accessible in both Maryland and Virginia prior to May 1. We are requesting this be the metric for reopening, as it makes sense for the health of the community and for us as major employers awaiting full reopening. Once everyone who wants a vaccine has had the opportunity to obtain it, we would like to return to being the economic engines of our community.



9:30

ANTHEM



This benchmark – two months after everyone who wants a vaccine has had easy access to it – will enable us to start the process of booking concerts, events, and games for audiences in the late summer and fall of this year. Unlike other industries, we cannot flip a switch to reopen. In addition to rehiring and retraining all of our furloughed workers, it will take music venues three to five months to book their calendars. If we can't predict with any certainty when our venues will be fully open for business, booking agents will opt to schedule their performing acts at venues in Maryland, Virginia, and elsewhere, which could create new touring behaviors, a potentially negative result for our industry and for all of the small business owners that rely on us to drive traffic to their neighboring bars, restaurants, and other establishments that are the life-blood of a healthy, vibrant city and key to attracting tourists to D.C. States and cities across the country are reopening and establishing reopening timelines. Most recently, Chicago, Denver, Phoenix, and Vermont announced a full reopening; Pennsylvania announced it would lift all restrictions on Memorial Day; California announced it would permit gatherings mid-June to have up to 5,000 people with no restrictions other than masks; Massachusetts has announced that as of August 1, all restrictions will be lifted and capacity will be increased to 100%, to name several. Concerts, games, and events are being scheduled and booked in other cities, and we are at a distinct disadvantage if we cannot also provide the metrics for which we will be permitted to host events.

We're eager to know when we can rehire the thousands of employees who have depended on our venues and put them back to work. As you know, we have been forced to furlough and lay off thousands of employees which has had devastating economic impact on them, their families, our community, and our organizations.

It's important to note that knowing the benchmarks for when we can reopen will allow the businesses that are located near us to bring their employees back and open their doors as well. A study in Chicago showed for every \$1 spent at a music venue, \$12 of economic activity was realized by neighboring businesses. The neighborhoods surrounding Capital One Arena, The Wharf, the Black Cat, and the 9:30 Club demonstrate the economic magnet that our venues create.

It was just announced that the District's tourism marketing organization is gearing up to launch a \$2.5 million ad campaign aimed at getting word out that D.C. is open for business. Last week, you stated, "We stand ready to work with our travel industry partners to make sure all of the investments that we are making will let everybody in the nation know, and indeed in the world know how special our destination is, and that it will be tops on their list for travel destinations." That's fantastic news, but if we're not fully open, that money will be ill spent.

The Capital City of the United States should be leading the way with smart metrics for reopening that will protect the health and well-being of D.C. residents but also allow businesses to plan, reopen, and recover. We need businesses to reopen as soon as it is reasonably safe to do so, so that we can resurrect the super-city that was growing and flourishing prior to the pandemic -- before more of the businesses that drive D.C.'s growth close their doors for good. Our proposal provides those metrics.

We are ready to meet to discuss how we can work together, and we hope for a prompt response.

Sincerely,

I.M.P., 9:30 Club, The Anthem, Lincoln Theatre

Monumental Sports, Capital One Arena, Washington Capitals, Washington Wizards, Washington Mystics