



15 September 2021

For the Attention of: The Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee

Live Performance Federal Insurance Guarantee Fund Bill 2021

We write to convey our full support for the Live Performance Federal Insurance Guarantee Fund Bill 2021.

The festivals and live events sector is in a precarious state as a result of lockdown restrictions, and faces an uncertain road to recovery post pandemic. Those staging live public events include promoters of music festivals and companies presenting live cultural performances, organisers of business events, exhibitions and conferences, companies in the hospitality sector, and of course, individual artists who perform and present tours around the state and nation.

In addition to the many workers, companies and contractors within these sectors, the venues and suppliers who contribute to these significant segments of our economy are also absorbing the impacts of the current crisis. These events bring audiences to the hospitality, tourism, hotel and restaurant industries. Their absence is being sorely felt, and their contribution is essential to the recovery of our city and state in the year ahead.

They have experienced significant loss of income, cancellations and business uncertainty throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. These sectors were some of the first to be impacted by the pandemic and will be one of the last to recover. While there has been welcome Government support for many parts of these sectors, including grants and compensation for losses to date, what is needed now to ensure business confidence for forward booking is an insurance product that can help these adjacent sectors.

Insuring future events against the costs incurred through cancellations and postponements due to Covid-19 would go some way in safeguarding the business confidence of these industries. By providing or underwriting an insurance policy product that offers pandemic coverage, you would provide these sectors with an enduring and viable commercial self-help solution, boosting business and sector confidence. This would encourage operators to develop a pipeline of events for late 2021, 2022 and 2023 that will create jobs, attract visitors, boost the economy and help us rebuild from the pandemic.

Currently, the private market is not meeting this need, as pandemic coverage is no longer available. We are asking the Government to underwrite the communicable diseases component of standard commercial event policies, as has been adopted in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands, giving their live event industries the confidence to plan future events.

There are a number of active and engaged bodies that represent live event stakeholders, some of which are already in conversation with the Government about support measures that include insurance.

After conversations with their representatives, we write to you to request that these stakeholders – from business events, to live performance and cultural events, to music festivals and tour promoters, and crucially artists themselves – be included in a working group, brought together by Treasury, to help design a viable events insurance product.

We understand the national nature of the touring circuit for all these industries requires a national approach. We therefore ask that National Cabinet discuss how such a scheme might be replicated or extended to provide coverage across Australia.

We ask that you form a working group with affected sectors tasked with developing an events insurance product which protects event operators and event stakeholders across these vital sectors to protect them in the instances of event cancellation or postponement.

Yours sincerely

Alex Greenwich MP
Member for Sydney

Clover Moore
Lord Mayor of Sydney

Jess Scully
Deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney