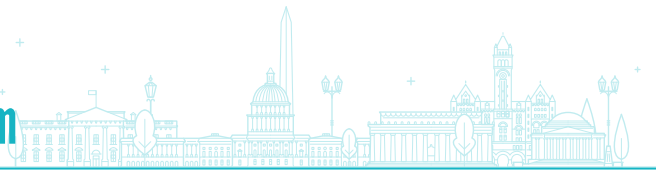


## COVID-19 and the App Ecosystem



In 2021, the global community is still struggling find balance and stillness in a turbulent environment created by the COVID-19 public health emergency. While many Americans turned to apps and the internet to communicate, work, or monitor their health and wellness, small businesses in the app economy had to quickly pivot often creating entirely new products to address these new demands, or shifting their business model and focus in just a few weeks.



Many App Association members have been working on the front lines to provide telehealth support and resources. Other members offered their services and expertise to businesses that needed to pivot to a digital presence, with many of these resources coming at no charge. For example:

- MotionMobs, based in Birmingham, AL, created the state’s contact tracing app using Bluetooth technology and a unified exposure notification application programming interface (API) created by Apple and Google.
- Vēmos Nightlife, based in Minneapolis, MN, offered its platform and expertise to service industry members facing unemployment to generate additional income through online classes and events.
- Particle Health, based in New York, NY, made its API for electronic medical records free to organizations and platforms screening for COVID-19



## To Support Small Businesses on the Front Lines We Urge Congress to:

- Push federal agencies, including the Small Business Administration, to issue updated guidance, when appropriate, to help small businesses navigate pandemic programs like the Paycheck Protection Program and subsequent COVID-19 relief legislation.
- Build on recently enacted pandemic-specific broadband support funding to enable more federal support for broadband deployment to and adoption by low-income and rural Americans. With the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) universal service fund facing a worsening shortfall in the coming years, Congress should consider options to future-proof the funding stream for its high-cost and low-income programs.
- Continue to conduct rigorous oversight of the FCC to implement the Broadband DATA Act and update its broadband access maps. Federal efforts to bridge the digital divide are only as good as the maps that show who has access and who doesn't. Access to the internet will continue to be critical for business and consumers alike during the pandemic and going forward.
- Pass measures like the **Telehealth Modernization Act (H.R. 1332/S. 368)**, 117th) which would permanently sideline outdated statutory restrictions on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' ability to cover telehealth services furnished to Medicare patients. All Americans should be able to access telehealth services from their provider regardless of where they are located at the time of their appointment.