



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MARTIN J. WALSH

February 21, 2020

Dear Mr. Yoshida,

Recently, we learned about Sony's decision not to attend this year's PAX East conference at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, citing fears about exposure to COVID-19 (coronavirus). While we understand that you are concerned for the health and safety of your workforce, we urge you to reconsider and to learn more about the realities of this global health issue.

Here are the facts: the risk of contracting coronavirus in Boston and Massachusetts remains extremely low. While we are taking every possible precaution to protect residents, visitors, and workers, we have no reason to believe that people should cancel their plans to visit our city. Our local, state, and federal health agencies have been working together to monitor the issue, and they have not issued any warnings against attending large events in Boston.

Fears about coronavirus are often fueled by confusion and lack of information. As a result, we've seen anti-Chinese and anti-Asian sentiment creeping up in our country and our communities. These fears reinforce harmful stereotypes that generations of Asians have worked hard to dismantle. They trigger our worst impulses: to view entire groups of people with suspicion, to close ourselves off, and to miss out on the opportunities and connections our global city provides.

Boston is united in our efforts to dispel these harmful and misguided fears. We are supporting local businesses and communities that have been negatively impacted and we are showing what a strong, diverse, proud city looks like. As a large, international company, you have an opportunity to set a good example. As a leader in technology, you can show that you are motivated by facts, not fear. As a leader in gaming and culture, you can show that you believe in connection, not isolation.

Again, we urge you to reconsider your decision, and to join the global gaming and technology community for PAX East next week. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about our coordinated public health efforts or our City's thriving culture of innovation.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston

David Gibbons
Executive Director, Massachusetts Convention
Center Authority