

July 16, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer,

As leaders of national local organizations, we are writing to make a bipartisan request to include direct flexible fiscal aid to localities and states in the next COVID-19 Relief Package that Congress will consider this month. Local and state governments have been severely impacted by COVID-19 and are facing significant budget deficits due to the dual impact of rising demands for services and plummeting revenues. COVID-19 has wreaked havoc across this country in an indiscriminate way – rural, suburban, and urban areas; young and old.

This is not and should not be a partisan issue. The Coronavirus has made it clear that it does not care whether you are Democrat or Republican or live in a “blue” state or “red” state. As you consider this request we hope that you will use four principles to guide your decision-making:

1. Funding must be directly allocated to cities, especially to cities under 500,000 in population.
2. Mayors and local governments must be able to utilize this funding in a flexible way that includes making up for revenue lost by the evaporation of economic activity due to the pandemic.
3. Additional funding must be made beyond the CARES Act, especially to ensure that cities have the financial capacity to endure the virus which has continues to plague our citizens and economy and shows no signs of slowing.
4. If local businesses are going to open – doing the best they can to be responsible – they need to know that our city, state and national government leaders will have their back. If it's not safe for them to open, the economy will fail.

Cities and metro areas are the economic engines of this country, providing over 90 percent of the nation's GDP. If you want to reopen America safely and robustly, America's cities are the place to begin. We are in unprecedented times. Cities cannot be expected to shoulder the burden of economic recovery alone and the federal government must be our economic partner

in this endeavor. With strengthened cities, businesses will find their footing again, joblessness will decline, and we will be able to continue to address the pandemic while keeping our cities open.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the initials 'E.G.' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Eric Garcetti, President
National Conference of Democratic Mayors
Mayor of Los Angeles, CA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Acquanea Warren' in a cursive style.

Acquanetta Warren, Chairwoman
Forum for Community Leaders
Mayor of Fontana, CA