

Sign-on Letter to Speaker Pelosi

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

We are grateful for your tireless work to address the needs of all Americans struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic, and for your understanding of the tremendous burdens that have been borne by localities as they work to respond to this crisis and keep their populations safe. However, we are concerned that the COVID-19 relief packages considered thus far have not provided direct funding to stabilize smaller counties, cities, and towns—specifically, those with populations under 500,000. As such, we urge you to include direct stabilization funding to such localities in the next COVID-19 response bill, or to lower the threshold for direct funding through the Coronavirus Response Fund to localities with smaller populations.

Many of us represent districts containing no or few localities with populations above 500,000. Like their larger neighbors, though, these smaller counties, cities, and towns have faced enormous costs while responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. These costs include deploying timely public service announcements to keep Americans informed, rapidly activating emergency operations, readying employees for telework to keep services running, and more. This work is essential to keeping our constituents safe and mitigating the spread of the coronavirus as effectively as possible.

We fear that, without targeted stabilization funding, smaller localities will be unable to continue providing these critical services to our constituents at the rate they are currently.

We applaud you for including a \$200 billion Coronavirus Response Fund as part of H.R. 6379, the Take Responsibility for Workers and Families Act—\$50 billion more than the Senate package provides. However, we are concerned that, in both the House and Senate bills, localities with populations under 500,000 cannot receive stabilization funds directly. As you work to craft the next package to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, we urge you to include direct stabilization funding to localities with populations under 500,000, or to lower the threshold for direct funding through the Coronavirus Response Fund. There's precedent for a lower threshold. Currently, localities with populations of at least 50,000 are eligible to receive funding through the Community Development Block Grant program. We believe this funding will allow smaller counties, cities and towns in our districts to continue the tremendous work they are doing to protect our constituents during this difficult time.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We stand ready to work with you as we continue to provide much-needed relief for the American people.

