



February 4, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

On behalf of the League of California Cities and the 477 cities we represent, we urge you to take swift and urgent action on comprehensive coronavirus relief legislation that includes direct, flexible funding for all cities as called for in President Biden's American Rescue Plan.

Our country's economic crisis from the pandemic is not over, and our cities are still waiting to receive meaningful levels of federal aid. By separating, and ultimately dropping, state and local aid from the omnibus appropriations and emergency spending bill in December, Congress has injected significant uncertainty into the capability of local governments to carry out their operations, just as a third wave of COVID-19 infections threaten to spread uncontrollably.

Based on the most recently available fiscal data and updated survey results from the National League of Cities, municipal governments nationwide are still facing a \$90 billion blow to their current year revenues.

For nearly a year, California cities have been on the front lines taking action to protect their residents and maintain the delivery of essential city services, despite the substantial unplanned expenses and revenue shortfalls caused by the pandemic. Cities are managing resources to support the efforts of first responders, coordinating regionally with other leaders across jurisdictional lines, enacting difficult and fiscally challenging emergency measures to slow the coronavirus epidemic, passing ordinances to limit the worst economic outcomes for residents and small businesses on the margins, and spending as necessary to protect public health and the economy in this extraordinary time.

At the same time, the still urgent, unmet need for federal aid has struck at the heart of local capacity to both carry out emergency response and participate in economic recovery. Without support, cities have been forced to cut budgets, services, and jobs. Sadly, across the state, more than 165,000 local government jobs have already been lost during the pandemic.

Without additional emergency funding and an **appropriate, fair, and equitable allocation of this aid for all cities**, counties, and states, a preventable setback to response, recovery, and vaccination distribution, will be unavoidable.

For the next package, we respectfully ask that you adhere to the following principles to reverse the fiscal shortfalls resulting from the pandemic:

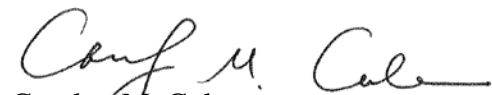
- **Emergency funding should be fair and appropriate for each and every local government, with no minimum population threshold for eligibility.**
- **Aid should be directly allocated through familiar and proven government revenue sharing programs.**
- **Entanglement of state and local funding should be minimized.**

To be clear, our cities are not asking for a “bail-out” of local governments. Rather, we are seeking an emergency lifeline so local governments can delay and ultimately avoid making temporary cuts permanent at a time when our communities need local services most, laying-off furloughed city and county employees who comprise a large share of America’s middle class, and indefinitely cancelling capital projects that will further impact economic recovery.

Ultimately, we are seeking emergency federal assistance that will ensure local leaders are part of the solution to our country’s economic recovery.

Thank you for your swift action during this truly unique moment in American history. Cities have been and will continue working hand-in-hand both within our communities and with the state and federal governments to ensure that America emerges from this pandemic stronger than we were before.

Sincerely,



Carolyn M. Coleman  
Executive Director and CEO  
League of California Cities

Cc: Members of the California Congressional Delegation