FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 12, 2021 Media contacts: Eric Wohlschlegel, 202-257-9506 or <u>ewohlschlegel@nga.org</u> James Nash, 202-624-3658 or <u>jnash@nga.org</u>

National Governors Association Chair Andrew M. Cuomo and Vice Chair Asa Hutchinson Statement on Meeting With President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris

WASHINGTON – New York Governor and National Governors Association Chairman Andrew M. Cuomo and Arkansas Governor and NGA Vice Chairman Asa Hutchinson issued the following statement after meeting with President Biden and Vice President Harris earlier today:

"Governors from across the country and the political spectrum have said for months that flexible and direct aid to state and local governments is essential for our continued front-line response to the COVID-19 crisis and our national economic recovery. During our Oval Office meeting today with President Biden, Vice President Harris, and a bipartisan group of Governors and mayors from across the country, the President and his team made clear that they recognize and appreciate how critical this targeted relief is for our ability to recover from this pandemic.

"We thank President Biden, Vice President Harris, and their team for a productive meeting and their support, and call on Congress to ensure sufficient state and local aid is included in the final relief package. The finish line of this pandemic is in sight, and this support will give states and territories the resources we need to reach it, while continuing to provide the essential services our constituents rely on."

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Founded in 1908, the National Governors Association (NGA) is the bipartisan organization of the nation's 55 Governors. Through NGA, Governors share best practices, address issues of national and state interest and share innovative solutions that improve state government and support the principles of federalism.



February 11, 2021

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney Chairwoman House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Reform 2157 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515 The Honorable James Comer Ranking Member House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Reform 2157 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Maloney and Ranking Member Comer:

I am writing to convey my strong support for including robust, flexible direct aid to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments as your committee helps craft COVID-19 relief legislation. The direct aid provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was a vital lifeline for state and local governments coping with an unprecedented public health crisis and severe economic disruption. To support the workers, businesses, and families that have borne the economic brunt of this crisis, and to ensure the most rapid reduction possible in unemployment, Congress must renew and improve this aid to provide a bridge to the time when mass vaccination of the population has been achieved.

It has been over a year since the first U.S. case of COVID-19 was detected in Washington State. In that time, we have aggressively confronted the pandemic with difficult, but necessary, measures to save lives. But as we move to vaccinate Washingtonians as rapidly as supply allows, and to reopen schools and businesses based on metrics guided by science, we continue to face the looming threats of new COVID-19 variants and continued high transmission across the country. We appreciate the relief provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act. But, as President Biden and I have both said, it can only be considered a down payment against the enormous challenge still before us.

The significant state and local funding proposed in President Biden's American Rescue Plan, which your committee is developing into legislation, is essential for Washington State and our local communities to effectively weather this period. Our state moved aggressively and prudently to allocate the \$2.1 billion we received from the Coronavirus Relief Fund, and despite the extension of the deadline to expend those funds to December 31, 2021, they are effectively exhausted.

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney and The Honorable James Comer February 11, 2021 Page 2

While Washington's economy has rebounded somewhat from the early days of the crisis last spring, revenue projections for the next three years remain more than \$3 billion below prepandemic levels and we face significant fiscal uncertainty for the foreseeable future. The pandemic has resulted in a decrease of nearly 200,000 jobs in our state.¹ Without additional relief, tens of thousands of Washington households will continue to face the threat of eviction or foreclosure in the coming months.

The uncertainty facing the state's economy is jeopardizing funding for essentials, such as basic health services and COVID-specific services, unemployment benefits, and services to the most vulnerable. Even with the use of the state's "rainy day" funds, without robust, flexible direct aid, we risk potential cuts to essential services that will likely impact first responders, educators, and the most vulnerable in our society, just as happened in the years immediately after the 2008 financial crisis.

With direct, flexible relief, Washington State could be in a position to provide additional funding in several key areas in the months ahead, including during upcoming supplemental and biennial budget processes. These include, but are not limited to:

- Rental, foreclosure, and utility assistance
- Support for long-term care facilities
- Additional assistance for businesses experiencing unemployment insurance experience rating impacts
- Relief for immigrant communities
- State and local vaccination and COVID-19 mitigation efforts
- Support for foundational public health infrastructure
- Food assistance

In November 2020, I wrote to congressional leadership that only Congress can provide the size and scale of relief needed in this moment. This remains true. The crisis has outlasted the initial allotment provided to state and local governments, which notably left out many local jurisdictions unless states elected to provide aid, as Washington did.

As governor, I have instituted a <u>hiring freeze</u>, <u>furloughs</u>, <u>wage increase cancellations</u>, and <u>vetoed</u> <u>or reduced hundreds of millions in spending</u> to tighten state government's belt without eliminating vital services. Contrary to claims that states like ours were victims of poor fiscal stewardship, prior to the pandemic, Washington State had one of the nation's <u>fastest-growing</u> <u>economies</u>, <u>one of the most well-funded pension systems in the country</u>, and a fiscal reserve of nearly \$2 billion. The scale of the crisis has challenged even the strongest economies, and that is why the nation's governors have been unified for nearly a year in calling for additional state and local aid from the federal government. It is long past time for Congress to act, and I applaud your committee for its swift action.

¹ December 2020 Monthly Employment Report, Employment Security Department

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney and The Honorable James Comer February 11, 2021 Page 3

These state and local funds can help support economic relief that will be the difference between a chance at a recovery that helps all Washingtonians, and years of sustained economic damage that will set families and communities back for the second time in a generation. Failure to help state and local governments make a strong recovery will inevitably undermine our national economic recovery throughout this decade, damage our ongoing response to COVID-19, and betray the public health and public safety heroes who have led us through this terrible time. Its inclusion, by contrast, will ensure that Americans get the robust federal response to this crisis that they deserve.

I invite you to reach out to Geoff Potter, Deputy Director of my Washington, DC Office at Geoff.potter@gov.wa.gov with any questions that you may have. Thank you for your consideration and attention to this request.

Very truly yours,

Guden

Jay Inslee Governor

CC: Washington Congressional Delegation Morgan Wilson, Director, Governor's Washington, D.C. Office Peter King, CEO, Association of Washington Cities Eric Johnson, Executive Director, Washington State Association of Counties



THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR GOVERNMENT HOUSE Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802 340-774-0001

January 26, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer Majority Leader United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

Re: Urgent Request for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Assistance

Dear Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the Government and U.S. citizens and residents of the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI), I write to request your continued support to ensure equitable treatment of the USVI and the other small Territories in any new COVID-19 stimulus legislation. I am extremely grateful for your leadership on this issue in 2020, and I very much hope that your long-awaited ascension to Majority Leader will yield even greater results in 2021 and the years to come.

You will recall that the CARES Act appropriated \$150 billion in direct Coronavirus Relief Fund aid to States, Territories, and Indian tribes, including \$3 billion for the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the insular areas (the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). We are grateful for that assistance, which helped the Territory successfully manage its first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic last summer.

As I explained to you in our very helpful telephone conversation last April, I respectfully wish to remind you that the allocation formula for the CARES Act funds significantly under-funded the small Territories. The \$3 billion set-aside for Puerto Rico, D.C., and the insular areas was allocated among them by relative population. This resulted in the USVI receiving approximately \$75 million—about one-sixteenth of the grants provided to even the smallest States, which received a minimum of \$1.25 billion.

Immediately following passage of the CARES Act, my Government sought assistance from our friends in Congress to ensure that any subsequent rounds of direct state and local aid employed a more equitable allocation formula. You were among the first Senators to offer your support for that effort. With new state and local aid legislation likely to be proposed early in the new term, I am seeking your continued support for an equitable distribution of any new aid funds.

As we discussed with you and your staff in 2020, we have proposed allocating one-half of one percent of the total direct-aid appropriation to the four small Territories—a formula successfully used in nearly a dozen other federal programs. We would also support a funding allocation like that adopted by the House in the HEROES Act (H.R. 925). Under that proposal, the four small

Territories and Puerto Rico would receive a lump sum, half of which would be allocated in equal shares to each Territory, while the other half would be allocated by relative population. If the CARES Act had used this formula, the four small Territories combined would have received approximately \$1 billion—about four times what they got, and significantly closer to the amount allocated to the smallest state.

Whatever the exact allocation formula employed, it is critical that any new state and local aid be available to replace lost tax revenues. This is particularly important in the Virgin Islands, which—like other tourism-dependent jurisdictions—has suffered economic losses disproportionate to its number of residents with COVID infections.

I would be grateful for a few minutes of your time later this week to discuss these matters. I can be available on Thursday January 28th or Friday January 29th and would be happy to accommodate your schedules on either of those days, or, if necessary, early the following week. Please let me know if any of those dates are convenient for you.

Thank you, as always, for your longtime and steadfast support of the Virgin Islands. I look forward to years of legislative achievements under your leadership.

Sincerely,

Albert Bryan Jr.

Governor

cc: Hon. Stacey Plaskett, Member of Congress (USVI) Governors of other Territories



THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR GOVERNMENT HOUSE Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802 340-774-0001

February 11, 2021

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney Chairwoman House Committee on Oversight and Reform United States House of Representatives

Dear Chairwoman Maloney:

I write to endorse the Committee on Oversight and Reform's legislation appropriating \$219.8 billion in new Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds, including \$4.5 billion to be allocated among the five United States Territories.

The Committee's proposal recognizes the extraordinary plight of the nation's State, Territorial, and local governments as we struggle simultaneously to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic and keep our economies afloat despite significant drops in revenue across the tourism sector. This crisis is particularly acute for the U.S. Virgin Islands, which derives fully 30% of its gross domestic product from tourism—an industry crushed by the drastic decline in travel forced by the pandemic.

The infusion of new Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds will enable the Territory to respond effectively to the existential financial threat posed by the pandemic and ensure the continuing health, safety, and welfare of the 105,000 American citizens who reside here. My Government strongly supports the proposed legislation.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of the Territory and all the people of the United States.

Sincerely,

Albert Bryan Jr. Governor

cc: The Honorable Stacey Plaskett, Member of Congress



February 10, 2021

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney Chairwoman House Committee on Oversight and Reform United States House of Representatives The Honorable James Comer Ranking Member House Committee on Oversight and Reform United States House of Representatives

Dear Chairwoman Maloney and Ranking Member Comer:

I am writing today in support of the committee providing additional funding for state and local governments. I have called for more state and local funding in further stimulus packages on multiple occasions, since states, including Pennsylvania, are in critical need. The unprecedented economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the additional expense of providing vital PPE and vaccine supplies, has created a complex situation in which states simply do not have the funds to support these expenses unless draconian budget cuts or hefty tax hikes are implemented. Support from the federal government is absolutely necessary to support the states.

Pennsylvania has been laser-focused on keeping our citizens safe and healthy during the largest public health crisis in modern history. My administration responded early and aggressively to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, taking steps that were previously believed unimaginable, with the goal of keeping our citizens, our economy, and our society safe. This has not been without significant pain. Pennsylvania's economy has been severely impacted by the necessary actions we have taken over the past eleven months to mitigate the spread of this deadly virus. Nearly a year ago, Pennsylvania identified our first probable-case of COVID-19 in the Commonwealth. The enormity of the economic impact of the past year is clear, and it is devastating.

In the past eleven months, we have seen sales tax collections plummet as businesses have closed their doors and people have stayed home and stopped or reduced their spending. Hundreds of thousands of citizens have lost their jobs or been forced to take lower paying jobs due to the economic crash. We have seen our economy slow as Pennsylvanians turn inward to protect themselves from this deadly virus. Due to these circumstances, state revenue, particularly in personal income and corporate income taxes, will be negatively impacted by more than \$4.5 billion through fiscal year 2021-22. The overall economic impact to Pennsylvania and local governments is steep, with an estimated state deficit of more than \$2.7 billion in 2019-20, out of a \$35 billion-dollar operating budget, with these impacts also affecting future fiscal years. This is a fiscal impact we have not experienced since the worst of the Great Recession.

While facing steep revenue losses, states have been forced to take on additional expenses as a result of the global pandemic. From bringing on infectious disease and vaccine experts, to purchasing PPE for our frontline workers, to expanded unemployment compensation, the strictly financial costs

of this pandemic continue to pile up. I am proud of my administration, which seeks to maximize the use every dollar we spend, but we can only stretch our finances so far. States were expected to bear the majority of the cost of this pandemic and are quickly approaching our limit without additional support from the federal government.

If additional funding is not allocated to the states, Pennsylvania will be forced to examine implementing draconian cuts to vital social services or steep tax increases due to the revenue shortfalls. We will not be able to fund critical education and training programs that provide our workforce with an economic bridge to recovery. We will not be able to open grant and loan programs to businesses who are struggling to get back on their feet after COVID-19 related closures. We will not be able to help hospitals and nursing facilities fill the budgetary holes opening up as they provide life-saving services to Pennsylvanians. We will not be able to expand social safety net programs, which have proven critical throughout this pandemic. We will be forced to ask for massive tax increases from our citizens to supplement these basic expectations of our government at a time when many are hurting financially and already struggling to protect their family's economic viability. That is a burden that is far too large to ask Pennsylvanians to bear.

The Commonwealth was relieved to be granted aid under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) in April 2020. Because of the non-supplantation language included in the bill, we could not use any of the CARES Act funding to build a balanced budget and had to explore alternatives. I continue to urge Congress, in further stimulus packages, to roll back this language and permit states to use federal funds to balance our budget and build a viable plan for getting ourselves out of this crisis with minimal fiscal damage.

The funding we received last year proved essential in assisting Pennsylvania in combatting the financial needs posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, but it is far from what is necessary to meet the moment. The pandemic has exposed and exacerbated holes in our safety net programs, causing widespread economic devastation putting millions of Pennsylvanians at risk of poverty and homelessness. States and local governments need additional funding from the federal government for critical highway construction; transit funding; financial assistance for families, particularly those with school age children in need of child care during the school day; support for direct care workers and long-term care facilities; resources to mitigate learning loss; and for small businesses to adapt to the changing marketplace, among other vital uses. Pennsylvania will not be able to support these public goods without federal support.

Those opposed to additional funding for state and local governments claim it disproportionately benefits traditionally "blue" states, which have mishandled their budgets and are now trying to seek bailouts from the federal government. Let me be clear in that this criticism is completely invalid. Every state in our union is suffering from the economic pitfalls of this pandemic, from the reddest rural areas to the bluest cities. Partisanship has no effect on the financial impacts of this public health crisis. In Pennsylvania, we are constitutionally required to pass a balanced budget each year. This legislative process is spearheaded by the General Assembly, which in my six years as Governor has been controlled by a Republican majority. This overly simplistic, generalized argument that Democratic states are fiscally irresponsible is not only wrong, but it also plays up a divisive and hyper-partisan rhetoric we are all working to eliminate in American politics, especially during these unprecedented times. States are anguishing equally from the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, regardless of Democratic or Republican leadership.

State and local government funding has also been cut from additional COVID-19 stimulus packages over high spending and price tag concerns. While I understand the concerns presented in this

argument, now is not the appropriate time to worry about our national debt. Our citizens need help. They need it quickly, and they need it to be fully funded. Providing aid to state and local governments allows us to expand workforce education and training programs to provide a bridge to recovery to those forced out of work. States can implement grant programs to assist industries which have been hardest hit by this pandemic, such as restaurants and entertainment venues. We could provide hazard pay to front line workers who have put their lives on the line for nearly a year. While fiscal responsibility is greatly important, what is more important is getting Pennsylvanians back to work and providing them relief from the financial hardships of this pandemic.

Simply put, additional funding must be allocated to state and local governments to protect vital services our citizens rely on every day, as well as mitigate the financial fallout of revenue losses. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to my office.

Sincerely,

TOM WOLF

STATE OF KANSAS

Capitol Building, Room 241 South Topeka, KS 66612



PHONE: (785) 296-3232 GOVERNOR.KANSAS.GOV

GOVERNOR LAURA KELLY

February 11, 2021

The Honorable Sharice Davids U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Davids:

Your support and efforts are critical as we work to protect Kansans and reinvigorate our economy while combating the Coronavirus. As state and local governments approach the start of the second year of response to the coronavirus pandemic, I am encouraged by the cooperation between Kansas's federal and state officials. I am confident that your efforts will keep Kansans safe and poised for the recovery that we anticipate.

I am encouraged to learn that legislation is under consideration to provide \$350 billion to state, county, and city governments. I have joined my fellow governors repeatedly over the past year to call for increased assistance for state and local governments on the front line of the coronavirus battle. The Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) in the CARES Act was an important step, but we are now almost a year past this first effort. More can be done to boost the state and local response as every agency of our governments struggles with the effects of COVID-19.

I appreciate your hard work on behalf of Kansas communities. You and your colleagues have my support for this legislative proposal.

Respectfully,

aura telly

Laura Kelly Governor of Kansas



MURIEL BOWSER MAYOR

February 7, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi Speaker United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable Kevin McCarthy Minority Leader United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

As Mayor, I am proud to represent 712,000 residents who make Washington, DC their home, but I also graciously accept the serious charge of safeguarding the employees of the federal government and the millions of visitors that come to the National Capital Region each year. I write to support President Biden's American Rescue Plan, and urge Congress to implement the plan as soon as possible, particularly as it pertains to the \$350 billion proposal for additional state and local funding. Providing direct, flexible aid to localities is the most efficient and immediate way to help families and communities who have been suffering for far too long. I ask Congress to include the following elements of the HEROES Act that are important to the District of Columbia:

- Provisions included in the "Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act" (HEROES Act) amending the "Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act" (CARES Act), to make the District whole in the amount of \$755 million to correct the misclassification in the CARES Act.
- Provisions included in the HEROES Act to provide fiscal relief to the District of Columbia at each level of government. Unlike other jurisdictions that can share responsibility and resources when addressing the coronavirus, we have the responsibility of providing all levels of the response, including state, county, and local responses. Funding using the HEROES Act framework would help ensure that the District of Columbia is sufficiently resourced to address the ongoing effects of the pandemic.

The coronavirus has already had a lasting impact on our economy. DC's Fiscal Year 2021 Local Budget Act of 2020 reflects a conservative loss of \$1 billion in revenues by the end of this fiscal year. Additional federal financial aid is sorely needed. We have fully obligated the \$495 million in existing coronavirus relief funding, and we have used our entire \$212 million fiscal stabilization reserve and \$517 million, or nearly 80 percent, of the District's local contingency reserve, to respond to the pandemic.

The coronavirus relief fund and our local reserves have been critical to supporting the District of Columbia's response to the pandemic. Funds have been used to support COVID-19 testing; contact tracing; PPE purchases; protective measures for elections and reopening schools and government facilities; hospital surge capacity; food assistance; housing and rental assistance; homelessness and shelter services; technology to support telework and new call centers; and small business grants to support our restaurants, hotels, retail and sports and entertainment venues.

Since March 2020, my team has worked hard to mitigate the spread of the deadly coronavirus, support communities and businesses struggling due to the pandemic, and begin to drive our economic recovery and return to relative normalcy. To date, the District of Columba has tested over 440,000 individuals, approximately 30% of which were provided to non-DC residents. According to the Johns Hopkins University, the District of Columbia ranks seventh amongst states and territories for tests provided per 100,000 residents¹. Additionally, we continue to rank first in the country regarding vaccine distribution, with 22,660 vaccines distributed per 100,000 residents².

The District's Unemployment Trust fund is also under stress due to the pandemic and the District cannot turn to the Coronavirus Relief Fund for assistance, as other states are doing. The District paid nearly \$1.3 billion in unemployment benefits in FY20, over \$1.1 billion more than FY2019. This high spend rate is continuing into FY21, where the District has made payments of nearly \$375 million to date. Due to this dramatic increase in payments, the District's Unemployment Trust Fund is projected to be depleted before March 2021. Further, projections estimate \$110 million in currently unfunded benefits will become due during Fiscal Year 2021 and \$200 million in currently unfunded benefits will become due through the end of Fiscal Year 2023.

The pandemic has presented unforeseen challenges from health, human, and economic standpoints that we haven't seen for generations. Local solutions to shore up the District's finances, without drastic cuts to critical staff and services are nearing exhaustion. As the trajectory of the coronavirus remains unclear, the District cannot sustain its current response without significant federal support, especially considering the new potentially more dangerous variants that have begun to appear in the United States and the region. As the seat of the federal government, whose staff, including your own, come from across the country, we are uniquely concerned about the possibility of a new wave of cases facing the District in the coming weeks and months. Additional, equitable state and local aid is critical to ensuring the District of Columbia can continue to respond to the ever-evolving circumstances rapidly and efficiently.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my Senior Advisor, Beverly Perry at Beverly.Perry@dc.gov.

Sincerek Murie Bowser Mayor

¹ https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/states-comparison

² https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations

Fact Sheet: What has the District of Columbia spent the \$495 million in Coronavirus Relief Funds on?

The wide eligibility guidelines of the Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) allowed the District to spend the allotment on a variety of response and recovery measures. Some of the most notable expenditures include overtime pay for public safety employees, \$58.3 million for small business grants, school modification and reopening efforts, increased rental assistance, and unemployment insurance payments. About \$45 million was reserved for FEMA Public Assistance local match, but if the 100% match resulting from new FEMA guidance is retroactive for all expenditures, this will no longer be needed and can be repurposed to other urgent needs.

Item	Amount
Public Safety and Health Pay/OT - FY 20	\$182,171,924
Small Business Assistance	\$58,300,000
Public Safety and Health Pay/OT - FY 21	\$37,667,310
FEMA PA match	\$36,452,752
School Building Readiness and Emergency Childcare	\$33,602,885
Office of Contracts and Procurement COVID 19 expenses	\$27,502,303
Healthcare Services	\$20,935,713
UI Administration + Improvements	\$17,304,940
Reopen	\$13,307,099
Housing Assistance	\$13,172,807
Family Rehousing and Stabilization	\$12,950,000
Local Stimulus Payments	\$11,444,000
Homelessness & Shelter Services	\$9,786,604
Alternative Care Site Public Assistance Local Match	\$9,568,648
IT Supports and Services for telework	\$7,774,412
Food Assistance	\$3,196,667
Total	\$495,138,063

Summary of COVID State Fund Allocations (as of 2/5/21)



February 3, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi Speaker U.S. House of Representatives H-232, The Capitol Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell Republican Leader U.S. Senate S-221, The Capitol Washington, D.C. 20515 The Honorable Charles Schumer Majority Leader U.S. Senate S-230, The Capitol Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy Republican Leader U.S. House of Representatives H-204, The Capitol Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Republican Leader McConnell, and Republican Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the people of Puerto Rico I commend you for making COVID relief the top priority of the new Congress. There is no question that the development and delivery of critical healthcare requirements and provisions to assist individuals and businesses suffering in the current economic downturn must be enacted and enacted quickly.

Swift action is especially important to Puerto Rico where the effects of the pandemic have been especially difficult because they came after a devastating hurricane, the most severe ever to damage a United States territory, and during a period of prolonged recession.

I urge you to consider not only extending fully the provisions in the next COVID package to Puerto Rico, but also eliminating underlying program disparities that have put Puerto Rico at a disadvantage historically when compared to the states and the District of Columbia, especially in the areas of public health, nutritional assistance, and family support. The pandemic has highlighted the impact that these disadvantages have had on the quality of life of vulnerable citizens on the



island, as well as the critical need and moral imperative to put the 3.2 million U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico on an equal footing with their fellow citizens on the U.S. mainland.

With that in mind, while I urge you to provide equal treatment in any and all of the programs that Congress will agree to in the coming months, I would highlight specifically a few of the larger and most critical areas in which there are historic programmatic disparities that also should be addressed:

Child Tax Credit (CTC). Under current law Puerto Rican families share in this important program only if they have three or more children and the financial benefit is far smaller than families receive on the US mainland notwithstanding the scope of financial need among families residing in Puerto Rico. I urge Congress not only to support extending the full amount of any new temporary CTC benefit to Puerto Rican families but also to extend the regular CTC to Puerto Rico on an equal basis.

I cannot stress how important it is for the CTC to apply fully in Puerto Rico, where the poverty rate is 45%, the highest in the United States, and more than twice that of any state. While the full extension of the extra CTC will be very helpful, the extension of the full regular CTC would go a long way to alleviate poverty in Puerto Rico over the long term.

Earned Income Credit (EITC). Congress has not extended the federal EITC to Puerto Rico. I urge you to end this disparity by fully extending the EITC to Puerto Rico, or in the alternative, to fund Puerto Rico's local EITC to equalize the benefits that the EITC provides to low income working families residing in the U.S. mainland. The EITC encourages people in lower income brackets to work and a more robust and better funded EITC program would also go a long way to help bring down our overall poverty rate.

Nutritional Assistance. The \$1 billion block grant in nutritional assistance that President Biden has requested for the U.S. territories in his American Rescue Plan will be very helpful to Puerto Rico. I would like, however, to work with Congress and the Administration to bring Puerto Rico into the federal SNAP program. Our local program, unlike SNAP, is a block grant and falls significantly short of what is available to help our fellow citizens on the U.S. mainland to feed their families.



Medicaid. Although Puerto Rico participates in Medicaid, the federal share of the cost of the program (FMAP) has always been below what that share would be in the case of a state; and Puerto Rico has never had the long-term funding commitment that states can depend on to provide healthcare to citizens close to or below the federal poverty line. For example, the federal share was temporarily increased to 76%, but unless action is taken otherwise the FMAP will fall to 55%, just slightly higher than the federal share of Medicaid for New York and California, even though both of them are among the wealthiest states and Puerto Rico has the Nation's highest poverty level.

Furthermore, in the case of Puerto Rico, federal Medicaid funding is subject to an annual cap pursuant to Section 1108 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1308), which renders the 55% FMAP unattainable, and only provides approximately 17% cost share of Medicaid costs on the Island, currently known as the Medicaid cliff. If Puerto Rico were treated equally under the funding formula without a cap, the federal share of Medicaid would be 83% on an ongoing basis.

I urge Congress you to use the COVID relief package as an opportunity to treat Puerto Rico equally for the Medicaid funding formula on a permanent basis so that we can provide adequate and reliable healthcare resources to the U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico, not just during a pandemic but on an ongoing basis as is the case in the states and the District of Columbia.

Stimulus Checks. Lappreciate Congressional support and the support of President Biden for raising the full amount of COVID-related stimulus checks to affected individuals by another \$1,400. The original \$600 payments are in the process of being distributed in Puerto Rico and I urge you to include Puerto Rico in the additional amounts.

Support for State and Local Government. The pandemic has put the same type of pressures on our government operations as in the states and we would be grateful to be included equally in any programs that provide support to state and local government.

Although Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States in 1898 and Puerto Ricans were given full United States citizenship in 1917 and have distinguished themselves in the Armed Forces in every conflict since the First World War and contributed in many the ways to this Nation, key federal programs dealing with health, family support, nutrition, and the promotion of gainful employment have



never been extended fully to Puerto Rico. Under those circumstances, Puerto Rico has lagged behind the Nation in economic development and the eradication of poverty.

I ask you on behalf of the 3.2 million U. S. citizens in Puerto Rico to not only to address the immediate pandemic concerns for the Nation, but also to end the disparities and unequal treatment in underlying programs that have made it difficult for Puerto Rico to enjoy the economic opportunities and prosperity that all Americans have long enjoyed.

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Prine "



STATE OF NEW YORK EXECUTIVE CHAMBER ALBANY 12224

ANDREW M. CUOMO GOVERNOR

February 4, 2021

Dear New York State Congressional Delegation:

I want to thank you for all the good work you have done for our great state. I am sorry for the trauma and ugliness that you have had to endure in the United States Capitol. These are trying times, my friends, and they are also highly consequential.

I believe the COVID relief bill that you will pass shortly is paramount to this state and nation's recovery. The politics and incompetence of the past federal administration has brought the nation to the brink. The COVID relief package must reverse the damage and right the ship.

Unlike any other year, the federal COVID relief bill will determine New York's state budget. State and local deficits can only be satisfied by Washington. The New York state budget requires 15 billion dollars to avoid massive tax hikes, layoffs, education cuts and healthcare cuts. Every economist projects negative economic consequences if that occurs. Remember the prior COVID legislation passed under Trump – the so-called Cares Act bills – were not truly targeted to COVID relief but funded states virtually regardless of COVID need and thus were a boondoggle for Republican states and short changed Democratic states.

I would ask you to consider three points.

First, COVID relief should be targeted to the need created by COVID. This is an emergency response bill. When a state is hit by an earthquake, the nation funds that state. It does not fund all states. While COVID affected many states, it devastated a few. New York was ground zero for COVID. It was the federal negligence that allowed COVID to come to New York for months undetected. The damage done in New York was exponentially higher than any other state. It is insulting to New Yorkers for anyone to suggest the COVID relief bill should become a typical pork barrel exercise. Target federal assistance the way COVID targeted its victims. New York deserves a disproportionate amount of COVID relief because New York suffered a disproportionate amount of damage. By any metric, New York would receive a larger proportional share of President Biden \$350 billion in state and local aid. If Congress distributed the \$350 billion funding by the number of lives lost to COVID, New York State would receive \$20.7 billion and local governments would receive \$13.8 billion. If the distribution formula reflected COVID related unemployment, New York State would receive \$15.1 billion and local governments would receive \$10.1 billion. Ironically, even if Congress was wholly political and disregarded all legitimate need factors and distributed only by a state's population – which would

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be a repulsive policy – New York State would still receive \$12.4 billion and local governments would receive \$8.3 billion.

To the extent the federal government needs revenue to fund COVID relief and reconstruction, it should raise taxes on the wealthy. Forcing an individual state to raise taxes to meet their need is compounding the injustice. In the new Zoom reality, people and businesses are more mobile and are already working remotely. Raising taxes in any one state puts that state at an economic disadvantage. The states' hit hardest by COVID, and which received insufficient aid from the Federal Cares Act funding, are Democratic states. A national tax increase avoids a race to the bottom among Democratic states. If New York does not receive \$15 billion to close the state deficit, we will have no option but to lay off workers, cut education and healthcare and raise taxes.

Second, Congress should avoid old school politics. The federal government directly funding schools, hospitals and local institutions is duplicative to state and local funding of these same entities and does more harm than good because those same entities will suffer state cuts, layoffs, and tax increases. Federal funding of schools through Title I does not address all regions of the state fairly. Likewise, funding hospitals directly by the federal government perverts state funding formulas that help hospitals in poor communities and safety net hospitals and aids wealthy well-endowed hospitals. Direct federal funding compounds this regressive policy by reducing the amount of funding state and local governments can provide to struggling schools and poor hospitals.

The simplest way to target funding equitably is to provide it through state and local governments. At a minimum, funding provided by the federal government should be an offset to state and local financing obligations and follow state formulas.

Third, the SALT legislation was unconstitutional and the first double taxation in history. New York State is still in litigation against the federal government to end SALT. Repeal is a priority as every month costs New Yorkers over \$1 billion in additional taxes. Every <u>day</u> SALT is not repealed costs New Yorkers almost \$34 million. It must be repealed now.

In sum, New York State paid a terrible price for COVID. Past federal efforts have only further hurt New York. The nation rejected Republican policies and we must not repeat, but rather correct, their mistakes. If New York State is forced to do layoffs, reduce funding to poor schools, reduce funding to safety net hospitals, and increase taxes we will see a situation go from bad to worse.

COVID-19 has hit thousands of homeowners and renters particularly hard. While eviction moratoriums put into place by my administration early on in the pandemic, and further extended in partnership with the legislature more recently, have staved off massive evictions and foreclosures, this approach is merely a stopgap. It is not possible for any state to address this crisis. Any recovery package passed by the Federal government must include a real solution to the looming eviction crisis and help New Yorkers struggling due to COVID-19 stay in their homes.

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Finally, the restaurant industry, which is the lifeblood of New York, must be saved. For too long, restaurants and bars were forced to shutter as a result of COVID-19. The federal government must provide real financial support to restaurants statewide to ensure they are able to reopen and support the tens of thousands hardworking men and women they employ.

The state is poised to re-launch. We will lead the nation in the new green economy, rebuild our transportation system, provide accessible and affordable universal broadband and attract the economy of tomorrow. We need a federal partner that works with us and not against us. And now your leadership provides that opportunity.

Sincerely, ANDREW M. CUOMO

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January 21, 2021

The Honorable Chuck 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. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy Minority Leader United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Thank you for your efforts to reach bipartisan agreement on an emergency coronavirus relief package in December, which is delivering desperately needed funds to combat and inoculate against the virus and ensure Oregonians have the resources to continue to weather this storm. This bill provided a timely and much needed down payment to meet the needs of our constituents during this health and economic crisis.

While hope is on the horizon, we know that this pandemic and the economic fallout are far from over. That was echoed by last month's jobs report that showed the economic recovery backtracking for the first time since April 2020, and it demonstrated how hard this pandemic has impacted people of color. At the same time, we are in the darkest days of the surge. To change course, it will require significant resources to turn the tide on the economic and health crisis, safely reopen schools, provide necessary assistance to families, and ramp up vaccine delivery to get shots into arms as quickly as possible.

As you consider additional steps to provide relief during this pandemic, I urge you to prioritize the following outstanding needs of the State of Oregon:

State and Local Aid

States have been on the frontlines of managing the response to the coronavirus pandemic including PPE, testing, contact tracing, and now vaccinations—while facing an increasingly challenging situation with rising costs and declining tax revenues. However, as you know, the most recent relief package did not include additional assistance to states, local governments, and tribes. Following nine consecutive years of budget growth, states saw revenue fall in fiscal 2020, The Honorable Chuck Schumer, et al. January 21, 2021 Page 2

and greater declines are expected in fiscal 2021. Many states have tried to hold off on making budget cuts as long possible, but with balanced budget requirements, states will inevitably have to make difficult budget decisions without substantial additional aid.

I want to be clear. This is not about bailing out mismanaged states, and it is not a red state-blue state problem. The coronavirus outbreak has affected the economy of virtually every state. Additional funding will ensure we can continue to provide vital services, keep frontline public workers like teachers and firefighters on the job, and avoid a weak recovery.

I urge Congress to provide at least \$350 billion in assistance to states and localities and allow it to be used to address revenue shortfalls. I also strongly recommend that the funding be provided directly to eligible localities, not placing the additional administrative burden on states to distribute local funding. Lastly, additional funding for tribal governments is also critically important.

Funding for vaccine distribution and testing and tracing

While Congress provided significant funding for testing, tracing, COVID mitigation, and vaccine distribution in the most recent bill, Oregon projects that the funding will only sustain operations at the current pace for approximately six months. We must work to protect our most vulnerable including the elderly, essential workers, and historically marginalized communities. It will require more resources to make sure these populations are educated about the COVID-19 virus and how to fight it.

Unemployment Insurance

The most recent relief bill expanded eligibility and extended the number of weeks unemployed workers can receive benefits. However, these benefits are set to expire in mid-March. And with the projection of even tougher days ahead, many people will continue to be unable to work. We cannot let up on assistance. I urge Congress to provide \$600 in weekly federal benefits to help Oregonians get through these difficult times and tie the continuation of UI benefits to economic conditions. Additional UI administration funding is also necessary to deliver the UI system of benefits.

Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP)

Further increasing the FMAP, and automatically adjusting it to the depth and duration of the economic downturn, will ensure additional federal funding is available to effectively respond to health care needs of Oregon's most vulnerable populations.

Governors Broadband Fund

High-speed, reliable internet connectivity has become essential during this pandemic for people to follow public health guidelines, access health care via telehealth, participate in e-learning, and work remotely. However, Oregon lacks a robust broadband infrastructure – especially in the rural and frontier parts of our state. While Congress made significant broadband investments in the most recent COVID relief package, little direct funding was available for states, many of which have worked to expand broadband availability during this pandemic. With a dedicated State Broadband Office, Oregon is well positioned to rapidly close the digital divide. I urge

The Honorable Chuck Schumer, et al. January 21, 2021 Page 3

Congress to establish a broadband program similar to the Governors Emergency Education Relief (GEER) fund to support the expansion of state broadband.

Education Funding

The December funding for schools and higher education was an important down payment to safely get our students and teachers back in the classroom and/or facilitate remote learning, but additional funding is necessary to meet the challenges of this crisis. I urge Congress to provide additional flexible resources for K-12, higher education and the Governors Emergency Education Relief (GEER) fund.

Nutrition Assistance

Many families—and particularly families of color—continue to struggle with food insecurity. The most recent COVID bill made an important down payment on nutrition programs, but additional action is necessary to help solve the deepening hunger crisis in American. Congress should extend the 15 percent Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) through the economic crisis and temporarily suspend the state matching requirement, invest additional resources in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and create a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families emergency fund and expand eligibility while relaxing work requirements and time limits.

Childcare

Oregon continues to experience a childcare shortage, as providers struggle to stay open and families face difficulties affording the costs. As a childcare desert before this pandemic, we need to build back our state childcare systems. Without additional relief as the pandemic rages on, many providers will be forced to close or unable to reopen, resulting in a slowed recovery if families are unable to return to work or continue their education. I urge Congress to provide additional childcare stabilization funds to ensure providers can keep the doors open, provide additional investment and extension to obligate funds through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program, provide additional investment through the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program, and increase tax credits to families to cover the cost of childcare.

Housing Assistance

Congress took a crucial step in creating and seeding emergency housing assistance in its most recent bill. However, renters, homeowners, and landlords are still at risk of falling behind on payments, which could lead to a wave of evictions and foreclosures and increase homelessness. Congress should extend and expand the eviction and foreclosure moratorium, provide additional emergency assistance to renters and landlords, and fund states and localities to offer emergency housing for those at risk of homelessness.

Small Business

Many small business owners in Oregon and across the country have had to adapt to keep their business alive as the pandemic drags on. Others are operating at limited capacity or have shuttered completely. These businesses provide local tax revenue and jobs and are critical to the vibrancy and livability of their communities. The Small Business Administration's Paycheck The Honorable Chuck Schumer, et al. January 21, 2021 Page 4

Protection Program (PPP) and Economic Injury Disaster Loans have been important lifelines for small business, especially minority-owned and women-owned business that have been closed off to traditional bank lending and credit programs. Additional aid through grants to hardest hit businesses in addition to small business financing programs are necessary to keep our Main Streets afloat.

Veterans

Veterans are severely impacted by the pandemic beyond healthcare needs. While Congress extended legislation for expanded housing supports to student veterans during the pandemic, gaps remain in their benefits due to the pandemic's effects on academic institutions. Additionally, state veterans' skilled nursing homes have experienced significant financial losses due to COVID-related costs and the inability to replenish funds as homes were unable to admit new residents. CARES Act funding proved essential to the survival of long term care facilities in 2020. Congress should consider ongoing COVID relief funding to all long term care facilities but especially to our state veterans homes.

Stimulus

The \$600 stimulus checks were an important, though inadequate, lifeline for families who have lost their jobs or seen their income plummet during this pandemic. An additional round of at least another \$1,400 in stimulus checks will help lessen the economic stress felt by American families and provide an important bridge toward our resilient recovery.

Emergency Paid Leave

Earlier last year, Congress passed federal paid sick leave for workers for a variety of scenarios related to COVID-19. However, this program was not extended in the most recent bill. Congress should reconstitute this important program for workers to ensure they are able to adequately care for themselves or their loved one without risk to their income or their job.

Thank you for your attention to the needs of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Kati Skour

Governor Kate Brown

cc: Senator Ron Wyden Senator Jeff Merkley Representative Suzanne Bonamici Representative Cliff Bentz Representative Earl Blumenauer Representative Peter DeFazio Representative Kurt Schrader U.S. House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

U.S. Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Members of Congress:

As elected leaders representing communities across our nation, we are writing to urge you to take immediate action on comprehensive coronavirus relief legislation, including desperately needed funding for states, counties, cities, and schools, and an increase in states' federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP). President Biden's ambitious \$1.9 trillion *American Rescue Plan* will go a long way towards alleviating the significant financial strain COVID-19 has placed on our states, counties, cities, and schools, and the pocketbooks of working families.

Working people have been on the frontlines of this pandemic for nearly a year and have continued to do their jobs during this difficult time. Dedicated public servants are still leaving their homes to ensure Americans continue to receive the essential services they rely upon: teachers and education workers are doing their best to provide quality education and keep their students safe, janitors are still keeping parks and public buildings clean, while healthcare providers are continuing to care for the sick. Meanwhile, it has been ten months since Congress passed the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund to support these frontline workers and the essential services they provide. Without significant economic assistance from the federal government, many of these currently-middle class working families are at risk of falling into poverty through no fault of their own. It is a painful irony that while many have rightly called these essential workers heroes, our country has failed to truly respect them with a promise to protect them and pay them throughout the crisis.

Our states, counties, cities, and schools are also in desperate need of additional funding. Due to the chaotic federal response of the previous administration, state and local governments have been left to shoulder the burden of responding to the pandemic using their finite resources to fight COVID-19 while helping their residents stay safe, healthy, and financially stable. Already 1.4 million frontline public service workers have been furloughed and laid off and more layoffs are expected. Black women, who account for the highest share of workers in the public sector, have been especially hard hit. In communities nationwide, this means reduced mental health and addiction services, lower emergency response times, higher patient loads for nurses, fewer answered cries for help from domestic violence victims, dirtier streets, overcrowded prisons, and decaying roads and bridges. There have also been cuts to schools, health care, and other core public functions needed to meet the logistical challenges of distributing the COVID-19 vaccine and crush this virus once and for all.

We need immediate action by the federal government to ensure the health, safety, and financial security of working people across our country and to breathe life back into an underperforming economy, which bled 140,000 jobs in December. The Economic Policy Institute (EPI) and others have argued persuasively that insufficient support for state and local services after the 2007 Great Recession slowed the recovery to full employment. We cannot repeat this same mistake. To beat this virus and ensure an inclusive recovery, we the undersigned call upon you to invest in our states, counties, cities, and schools without delay.

Sincerely,

Tony Evers, Governor, State of Wisconsin

Joshua F. Tenorio, Lieutenant Governor, Territory of Guam Denny Heck, Lieutenant Governor, State of Washington Bethany Hall-Long, Lieutenant Governor, State of Delaware Mandela Barnes, Lieutenant Governor, State of Wisconsin John Fetterman, Lieutenant Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Kate Marshall, Lieutenant Governor, State of Nevada Molly Gray, Lieutenant Governor, State of Vermont

Henry Beck, State Treasurer, State of Maine Zach Conine, State Treasurer, State of Nevada Tobias Read, State Treasurer, State of Oregon Seth Magaziner, State Treasurer, State of Rhode Island Nancy K. Kopp, State Treasurer, State of Maryland Michael Fitzgerald, State Treasurer, State of Iowa Dave Young, State Treasurer, State of Colorado Sarah Godlewski, State Treasurer, State of Wisconsin Lynn Rogers, State Treasurer, State of Kansas Mike Pellicciotti, State Treasurer, State of Washington Fiona Ma, CPA, State Treasurer, State of California Colleen C. Davis, State Treasurer, State of Delaware

Rob Sand, State Auditor, State of Iowa

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Zack Fields, Representative, Alaska House of Representatives

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Shamann Walton, President, Board of Supervisors, City & County of of San Francisco, CA

Bernie Rhinerson, Trustee, San Diego Community College District, CA Craig Foster, School Board Member, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, CA Jon Kean, School Board Member, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, CA Laurie Lieberman, School Board Member, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, CA Maria Leon-Vazquez, School Board Member, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, CA Katherine M. Miller, County Supervisor, San Joaquin County, CA Susan Gorin, County Supervisor, Sonoma County, CA Jose Sigala, Councilmember, City of Tulare, CA Kelly Anne Welsh, School Board Member, City of Vacaville, CA

Alec Garnett, Speaker of the House, Colorado House of Representatives Jessie Danielson, Senator, Colorado State Senate Chris Kolker, Senator, Colorado State Senate Dominick Moreno, Senator, Colorado State Senate Brittany Pettersen, Senator, Colorado State Senate Tammy Story, Senator, Colorado State Senate Faith Winter, Senator, Colorado State Senate Rachel Zenzinger, Senator, Colorado State Senate Judy Amabile, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Adrienne Benavidez, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Yadira Caraveo, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Lindsey Daugherty, State Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Monica Duran, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Daneya Esgar, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Matt Gray, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Edie Hooton, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Chris Kennedy, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Cathy Kipp, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Karen McCormick, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Dylan Roberts, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Emily Sirota, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Kerry Tipper, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Brianna Titone, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Mike Weissman, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Steven Woodrow, Representative, Colorado House of Representatives Eva Henry, Commissioner, Adams County, CO Emma Pinter, Commissioner, Adams County, CO Crystal Murillo, Councilmember, City of Aurora, CO Juan Marcano, Councilmember, City of Aurora, CO Nicole Johnston, Councilmember, City of Aurora, CO Aaron Brockett, Councilmember, City of Boulder, CO Matt Johnston, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Brighton, CO Jennifer Allen-Thomas, Councilmember, City of Commerce, CO

Candi CdeBaca, Councilmember, City of Denver, CO Chris Hinds, Councilmember, City of Denver, CO Jamie Torres, Councilmember, City of Denver, CO Kevin Flynn, Councilmember, City of Denver, CO Paul Kashmann, Councilmember, City of Denver, CO Robin Kniech, Councilmember, City of Denver, CO Angela Cobián, Treasurer, Denver Board of Education, City of Denver, CO Dana Gutwein, Councilmember, City of Lakewood, CO

Derek Slap, Senator, Connecticut State Senate Matt Lesser, Senator, Connecticut State Senate Edwin Vargas, Representative, Connecticut House of Representatives Gary Turco, Representative, Connecticut House of Representatives Henry Genga, Representative, Connecticut House of Representatives Michael DiGiovancarlo, Representative, Connecticut House of Representatives

Lori Berman, Senator, Florida State Senate, FL Tina Polsky, Senator, Florida State Senate Sabrina Javellana, Commissioner, City of Hallandale Beach, FL Ju'Coby Pittman, Councilmember, City of Jacksonville, FL Darryl Willie, School Board Member, City of Jacksonville, FL Marilyn Davis, Commissioner, City of Lauderdale Lakes, FL Brian Welch, Commissioner, Lean County, FL Mack Bernard, Councilmember, Palm Beach County, FL Alexandria Ayala, School Board Member, Palm Beach County, FL Karen M. Brill, School Board Member, Palm Beach County, FL Debra L Robinson MD, School Board Member, Palm Beach County, FL Chelsea Reed, Councilmember, City of Palm Beach Gardens, FL Rachelle Litt, Vice Mayor, City of Palm Beach Gardens, FL Jeremy Matlow, Commissioner, City of Tallahassee, FL Jacqueline Porter, Commissioner, City of Tallahassee, FL Christy Fox, Commissioner, City of West Palm Beach, FL

Emanuel "Chris" Welch, Speaker of the House, Illinois House of Representatives Omar Aquino, Senator, Illinois State Senate Christopher Belt, Senator, Illinois State Senate Jacqueline Y. Collins, Senator, Illinois State Senate John Connor, Senator, Illinois State Senate Sara Feigenholtz, Senator, Illinois State Senate Ann Gillespie, Senator, Illinois State Senate Mattie Hunter, Senator, Illinois State Senate Emil Jones III, Senator, Illinois State Senate Patrick Joyce, Senator, Illinois State Senate Dave Koehler, Senator, Illinois State Senate Antonio Munoz, Senator, Illinois State Senate Robert Peters, Senator, Illinois State Senate Steve Stadelman, Senator, Illinois State Senate Celina Villanueva, Senator, Illinois State Senate Ram Villivalam, Senator, Illinois State Senate Cristina Pacione-Zayas, PhD, Senator, Illinois State Senate

Jaime M. Andrade, Jr., Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Dagmara Avelar, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Kam Buckner, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Kelly Burke, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Jonathan Carroll, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Kelly Cassidy, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Lakesia Collins, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Deb Conroy, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Margaret Croke, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Will Davis, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Eva-Dina Delgado, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Daniel Didech, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Marcus C. Evans, Jr., Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Mary Flowers, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives La Shawn K. Ford, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Robyn Gabel, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Edgar Gonzalez, Jr., Representative, Illinois House of Representatives LaToya Greenwood, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Will Guzzardi, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Michael W. Halpin, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Sonya M. Harper, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Maura Hirschauer, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Lindsey LaPointe, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Theresa Mah, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Joyce Mason, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Anna Moeller, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Bob Morgan, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Robert A. Rita, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Lamont J. Robinson, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Justin Slaughter, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Curtis J. Tarver II, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives David Vella, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Maurice West, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Jawaharial Williams, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Kathleen Willis, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Sam Yingling, Representative, Illinois House of Representatives Maria Hadden, Alderwoman, City of Chicago, IL Byron Sigcho Lopez, Alderman, City of Chicago, IL Sophia King, Alderwoman, City of Chicago, IL Daniel La Spata, Alderman, City of Chicago, IL Matthew J. Martin, Alderman, City of Chicago, IL

Michael D. Rodriguez, Alderman, City of Chicago, IL Rossana Rodríguez Sánchez, Alderwoman, City of Chicago, IL Michele Smith, Alderman, City of Chicago, IL Jeanette B. Taylor, Alderwoman, City of Chicago, IL Anna Valencia, City Clerk of Chicago, City of Chicago, IL Andre Vasquez, Alderman, City of Chicago, IL Scott Waguespack, Alderman, City of Chicago, IL Nathaniel George Booker, Councilmember, Village of Maywood, IL Arti Walker-Peddakotla, Trustee, Village of Oak Park, IL

Jared Evans , Councilmember, City of Indianapolis, IN

Tony Bisignano, Senator, Iowa State Senate Joe Bolkcom, Senator, Iowa State Senate Nate Boulton, Senator, Iowa State Senate Claire Celsi, Senator, Iowa State Senate William A. Dotzler, Jr., Senator, Iowa State Senate Sarah Trone Garriott, Senator, Iowa State Senate Eric Giddens, Senator, Iowa State Senate Robert Hogg, Senator, Iowa State Senate Pam Jochum, Senator, Iowa State Senate Kevin Kinney, Senator, Iowa State Senate Jim Lykam, Senator, Iowa State Senate Liz Mathis, Senator, Iowa State Senate Janet Petersen, Senator, Iowa State Senate Herman C Quirmbach, Senator, Iowa State Senate Amanda Ragan, Senator, Iowa State Senate Jackie Smith, Senator, Iowa State Senate Todd E. Taylor, Senator, Iowa State Senate Zach Wahls, Senator, Iowa State Senate Liz Bennett, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Christina Bohannan, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Sue Cahill, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Molly Donahue, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Tracy Ehlert, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Ruth Ann Gaines, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Eric Gjerde, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Chris Hall, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Steven D. Hansen, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Bruce Hunter, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Dave Jacoby, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Lindsay James, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Jennifer Konfrst, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Bob Kressig, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Monica Kurth, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Mary Mascher, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives

Jo Oldson, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Timi Brown-Powers, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Todd Prichard, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Art Staed, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Sharon Steckman, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Kristin Sunde, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Cindy Winckler, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives Mary Wolfe, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives

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Damon Seils, Councilmember, Town of Carrboro, NC

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