



April 30, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

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

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

On behalf of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), we are grateful for your leadership to help communities contend with the immense challenges of COVID-19.

Local governments at the county and municipal levels in communities of all sizes are on the front lines of emergency response while also facing potentially crippling budget shortfalls from decreases in locally generated tax revenue and increases in unanticipated expenses. For this reason, **we collectively request that significant additional funding specifically for local governments be included in the next coronavirus response legislation.** Federal funding for communities of all sizes is necessary in order to meet the current and emerging challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. This funding should be flexible so that it can be spent on expenses related to COVID-19 or used to fill revenue shortfalls caused by the pandemic.

Our associations represent regional and metropolitan planning organizations across the nation. These organizations go by terms such as metropolitan planning organization, regional planning organization, rural planning organizations, council of governments, regional council, regional planning commission, coordinating agency and more. Typically, they are themselves units of local government, and their boards consist of elected city and county officials who make decisions on issues of importance that cross jurisdictional boundaries. These organizations play vital roles in distributing federal funding, providing technical support, and many other functions that help local governments operate more effectively and efficiently. MPOs and regional organizations help communities of all sizes – including smaller communities – access federal funding across a variety of programs. To this end, **regional organizations should be deemed as eligible to certify and directly receive federal funds for coronavirus response and recovery.** They can help ensure that funds are distributed equitably among local communities so that nobody is left out from receiving federal assistance.

Regional planning organizations thank you for your attention to the issues facing cities and counties during this challenging time. There remains much to be done, and our members look forward to the opportunity to contribute where they can.

Sincerely,

Bill Keyrouze
Interim Executive Director
Association of Metropolitan
Planning Organizations

Leslie Wollack
Executive Director
National Association
of Regional Councils

Joe McKinney
Executive Director
National Association
of Development Organizations