

WESTERN STATES PACT

May 11, 2020

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

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

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

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

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

It is now clear that COVID-19 will be with us for the foreseeable future, and the worst of its economic impact is yet to come. Our states are on the front line against the virus while at the same time leading our states' recovery. Each of us has seen first-hand how COVID-19 has caused a national recession that we are seeing play out in our states – resulting in a record amount of lost wages and business failures, spiraling unemployment and substantial, unplanned COVID-19-driven costs.

We deeply appreciated the quick financial assistance you provided workers, small business people and those who have been displaced by this crisis. But now, however, our states will be forced to make deep cuts to programs that help those same individuals without similar relief efforts for state and local governments. Even states that began the year in a strong fiscal position are facing staggering deficits amid growing costs of responding to the crisis. With unemployment projected to surpass that of the Great Recession, we are facing unprecedented and ongoing economic challenges.

Without federal support, states and cities will be forced to make impossible decisions – like whether to fund critical public healthcare that will help us recover, or prevent layoffs of teachers, police officers, firefighters and other first responders. And, without additional assistance, the very programs that will help people get back to work – like job training and help for small business owners – will be forced up on the chopping block.

That's why we are respectfully, and urgently, requesting \$1 trillion in direct and flexible relief to states and local governments. Though even this amount will not replace the decline in revenue that we forecast, it will make a meaningful difference in our ability to make-up for COVID-19 revenue losses. This aid would preserve core government services like public health, public safety, public education and help people get back to work. It would help our states and cities come out of this crisis stronger and more resilient.

Red and blue states alike all are faced with the same COVID-19 math, as are Democratic and Republican mayors across our states. The moment requires unprecedented partnership from all of us – across every level of government and across party.

We urge you to take swift action to help states and local governments provide core government services for American families.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom
Governor of California



Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado



Toni Atkins
President Pro Tempore of the
California State Senate



Leroy Garcia
President of the Colorado State
Senate



Anthony Rendon
Speaker of the California State
Assembly



Steve Fenberg
Majority Leader of the Colorado
State Senate



Marie Waldron
Minority Leader of the California
State Assembly



KC Becker
Speaker of the Colorado House of
Representatives



Alec Garnett
Majority Leader of the Colorado
House of Representatives



Kate Brown
Governor of Oregon



Tina Kotek
Speaker of the Oregon House of
Representatives



Peter Courtney
President of the Oregon Senate



Steve Sisolak
Governor of Nevada



Nicole Cannizzaro
Majority Leader of the Nevada
Senate



Jason Frierson
Speaker of the Nevada State
Assembly



Jay Inslee
Governor of Washington



Andy Billig
Majority Leader of the Washington
State Senate



Laurie Jenkins
Speaker of the Washington House of
Representative

cc: California congressional delegation
cc: Colorado congressional delegation
cc: Oregon congressional delegation
cc: Nevada congressional delegation
cc: Washington congressional delegation