



Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco, Fresno, Sacramento,  
Long Beach, Oakland, Bakersfield, Anaheim, Santa Ana, Riverside, Stockton

August 26, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

On behalf of the Republican and Democratic mayors of the 13 largest cities in America's largest state — representing 11 million residents — we thank you for your leadership in confronting the coronavirus pandemic, and the cascading economic impacts that the COVID-19 response has wrought. As negotiations continue on the next Coronavirus relief package, we are confident that common ground can be found to lift local communities that are in need of federal assistance now more than ever. We have poured our local resources into stopping the spread of this virus, saving lives, and protecting our residents' health and economic security. With a pandemic unprecedented in scope and breadth, a disease infecting people across municipal boundaries, and the massive economic blow devastating our revenues and budgetary balances — local governments simply cannot lead the response and plan for the recovery on their own.

As a bipartisan group of Mayors, we understand the need for compromise and encourage Congress to come together on an appropriately sized relief package that is a middle ground between the current Democratic and Republican bills. This package should provide necessary state and local assistance, support workers and the unemployed, help tenants and landlords prevent an eviction crisis, and provide necessary protections for businesses, schools and colleges, charities, and religious organizations when the economy reopens.

With your leadership, the landmark CARES Act had a massive impact in sustaining millions of our families and small businesses. As we write this, those federal dollars are at work in our communities, providing food security, housing infected homeless residents, closing the digital divide, and expanding testing and contact tracing.

Yet the virus continues its spread in communities throughout California, and in states across the country. More federal assistance is needed now, and we need our federal leaders to return to the negotiating table. Specifically, we hope that a comprehensive relief package will include the following priorities:

**Direct Local Emergency Fiscal Relief:** Congress should provide direct emergency fiscal relief to state and local governments, including direct assistance to cities of all sizes, to address COVID-19 impacts and to fight the effects of this pandemic. Our cities are on the frontline of this battle, and partnering with the federal government is needed to continue to meet this challenge head on. The shutdown of several key sectors of our economy has decimated our municipal budgets in a manner never before seen in our lifetimes, dramatically halting revenue streams that will imperil the provision of basic services such as police, emergency medical response, and fire. The anticipated shortfalls to general fund budgets exceed 10 percent of revenues for FY 20-21, meaning the safety of our residents depends upon federal assistance.

**Extend Unemployment Insurance and Provide Direct Stimulus:** With more than 33 million Americans receiving unemployment benefits, Congress should extend supplementary unemployment benefits until a safe return to work is viable. The next stimulus package should provide standards to ensure a safe environment for employees returning to work, while also protecting employers who comply with public health guidelines to provide a healthy and safe workplace. Finally, Congress should enact another round of direct stimulus payments, which would assist all unemployed residents, including mixed earners in our creative arts community around the country.

**Housing and Homelessness:** To prevent the looming eviction crisis, Congress should incorporate a comprehensive strategy in the next Coronavirus relief package that includes funding for emergency rental and mortgage assistance. In order to truly prevent homelessness, the package should include an emergency fund that is structured to assist landlords, tenants and homeowners alike. This funding, combined with robust eviction and foreclosure moratoria, will prevent mass evictions and keep people housed. Congress should also require HUD to distribute the \$2 billion in CARES Act CDBG funding that it has yet to release. Tens of thousands of Americans struggle to pay rent, and without bold action from Congress, cities across the United States will face an unprecedented surge of evictions. We cannot allow this pandemic to exacerbate our crisis of homelessness.

**Safe Harbor Protections for Businesses and Other Organizations:** We believe that any coronavirus relief legislation must include meaningful safe harbor provisions for businesses, schools and colleges, religious organizations, charities, and other entities protecting them from liability when public health orders are lifted, and the economy starts to reopen. Any such provisions should apply only to those entities who take the required steps to follow all federal, state, and local public health orders and guidance on reopening. For life to return to normal, the pandemic needs to subside so people can start to go back to work and school, but for that to happen, businesses and schools must have the confidence that if they follow public health guidelines, reopening will not subject them to lawsuits that could damage businesses as much as if they were ordered to reclose.

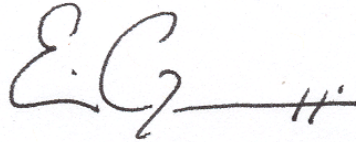
With each relief bill passed by Congress to help us defeat this virus, we can take vital steps forward toward rebuilding healthier, more sustainable, and more equitable communities. Thank you for considering our views. We remain committed to working in collaboration with you to tackle this pandemic.

Sincerely,

California Big City Mayors Coalition



**Sam Liccardo**  
Mayor  
City of San José



**Eric Garcetti**  
Mayor  
City of Los Angeles



**Kevin Faulconer**  
Mayor  
City of San Diego



**London Breed**  
Mayor  
City of San Francisco




**Lee Brand**  
Mayor  
City of Fresno



**Darrell Steinberg**  
Mayor  
City of Sacramento



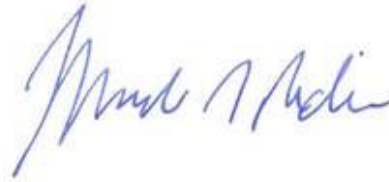
**Robert Garcia**  
Mayor  
City of Long Beach



**Libby Schaaf**  
Mayor  
City of Oakland



**Karen Goh**  
Mayor  
City of Bakersfield



**Harry Sidhu**  
Mayor  
City of Anaheim



**Miguel Pulido**  
Mayor  
City of Santa Ana



**Rusty Bailey**  
Mayor  
City of Riverside



**Michael Tubbs**  
Mayor  
City of Stockton