



Dear Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott,

On behalf of mayors from across the state of Florida, we are writing to request your support for direct federal funding for municipal governments to help mitigate the losses from COVID-19. And with the pandemic showing little sign of slowing down, we ask for your support to help us weather the economic impacts of this unprecedented and unexpected event.

COVID-19 has affected every Florida city, and it has resulted in major public health and safety challenges requiring significant demand for the critical services our cities provide. We not only help ensure the safety of our communities, but we also employ thousands of essential workers. As we face diminished revenues, any cuts to our staff impact both the ability to provide those services and contribute to our economic downturn. Absent direct federal assistance, we will be forced to cut our workforce, exacerbating the economic and public health crisis we face.

Additionally, many local business owners are still struggling to stay open and to keep their dreams alive. Federal assistance would allow cities to continue to support those businesses, and the jobs they provide, through low-interest loans, grants and other innovative and impactful programs.

Florida has received more than \$8.3 billion from the Coronavirus Relief Fund, and while we appreciate your efforts to try to address these issues in the previous round of federal relief packages, due to the population thresholds in the CARES Act, **only one Florida city qualified for direct federal support.**

Some proposals currently being considered by Congress would allow state/local governments to use CARES Act dollars to make up lost revenue. Since 410 of FL's 411 cities were excluded from the CARES Act, this is **not going to solve the problem, and that's why additional funding is needed.** In fact, expanding the use of previously distributed dollars may serve as an even bigger disincentive and may encourage recipient counties to not share the dollars they received.

We need Congress to pass dedicated and flexible funding for cities in the next stimulus package. This is **not a request for a handout, nor a call for a federal bailout.** Direct emergency funding to municipalities focused on COVID-19 will help to support local jobs and small businesses, protect local first responders and residents, maintain essential services and keep neighborhoods safe.

Our cities have been an important part of the COVID-19 response. We must also be an important part of the recovery.

Sincerely,
Florida Mayors