

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 10, 2020

The Honorable Philip D. Murphy
Governor of the State of New Jersey
Office of the Governor
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Murphy:

We write to request critically needed funding for Warren, Sussex, Hunterdon, and Salem Counties that was appropriated to New Jersey through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

As you are aware, these counties, and their respective municipalities, did not receive federal funding through Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) set forth in the CARES Act utilizing long-standing, unchangeable, and automatic formulas. These formulas were set into place under the Administration of President Gerald R. Ford, in 1974 and 1977. Warren and Sussex Counties, along with Hunterdon and Salem Counties, did not meet any of the three criteria of these automatic, predetermined federal formulas: 1) counties with at least 500,000 people; 2) cities with populations more than 50,000; or 3) “principal cities,” which is a Census formula designation.

That said, beyond the set formulas which are out of our control, the State of New Jersey also received certain non-entitlement funding through the CDBG (more than \$4 million) and ESG (more than \$11 million) programs that you can allocate based on discretionary need throughout the State, particularly to help struggling municipalities that did not receive enough relief. We believe these counties meet that requirement and ask that you please immediately allocate the discretionary funding to these localities.

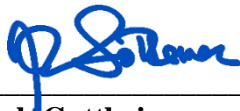
These four counties remain in the so-called “hot” region of the outbreak in our State and need this critical funding to get through the challenging next weeks and months. This funding will give municipal governments the flexibility to best address their most urgent needs, continue providing essential services for residents, and help their communities recover from the economic fallout caused by this public health crisis.

New Jersey’s Department of Health has reported that the pandemic has not yet peaked and is expected to worsen in the coming weeks. Our State already has the unfortunate ranking of the second largest outbreak by total number of cases — second only to our closest neighbors to the north, New York.

Separately, in the weeks ahead, as CARES Act resources are delivered through the State to local municipalities, we urge you to keep a watchful eye on what is directed to these counties. The federal legislation, among other relief dollars, has resources for local first responders, schools, and hospitals — not to mention what is currently being distributed directly in rescue dollars to small businesses, non-profits, and individuals. There is also a strong effort for the next round of emergency Coronavirus legislation, which we support, to adjust any formulas that inadvertently exclude rural areas like ours. We'd be grateful for your public support of these changes.

Thank you for all of your tireless efforts on behalf of our State during this trying time and thank you for your consideration of this request on behalf of our shared constituents.

Sincerely,



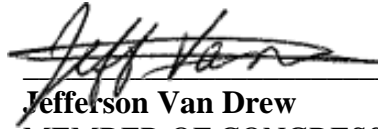
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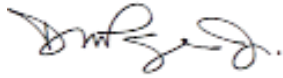
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