

June 17, 2020

Governor Jay Inslee  
Office of the Governor

Senator Christine Rolfes  
Chair, Senate Ways & Means Committee

Senator John Braun  
Ranking member, Senate Ways & Means Committee

Representative Timm Ormsby  
Chair, House Appropriations Committee

Representative Drew Stokesbary  
Ranking member, House Appropriations Committee

***RE: CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds for cities***

Governor Inslee and Honorable Legislative Fiscal Leaders:

On behalf of Washington's 281 cities, thank you for your leadership during this difficult time. Cities across our state are grateful for the partnership between the state and local governments. In many ways, cities are struggling to meet the same challenges facing our state, including responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the resulting economic crisis, and recent demonstrations and calls to address race, equity, and policing. As always, we believe that together we are stronger and will emerge from these struggles as a better Washington.

We especially appreciate the state's decision to share CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) with all cities. Washington was a leader in stepping up to partner with cities in this way and now other states are following suit. These funds are a huge help for our residents and relief to city leaders.

The initial decision to share approximately \$297 million with cities and counties was significant, but it also leaves \$240 million yet to be designated for distribution. Cities across the state have expenses that will exceed the initial allocation. In a recent survey of cities, 87% of respondents said that they have higher-than-expected costs for COVID-related expenses such as PPE, overtime, hazard pay, and quarantine housing for employees. Given that the federal government requires that these funds must be expended by the end of 2020, time is of the essence to distribute the remaining funds.

For this reason, we call upon you to make the remaining \$240 million available immediately to local governments so they may request to cover eligible costs that exceed their existing allocations. We ask you to allocate the funding and direct the Department of Commerce to notify cities that the additional funding is available for eligible costs that exceed their initial allocation. We would also respectfully request that the current deadline of October 31 set by the Department for cities to spend the allocated funds be extended to December to maximize cities' ability to be reimbursed for all eligible costs.

We know we will be responding to COVID-19 public health impacts for many months to come and that we will be dealing with the economic impacts potentially for years to come. However, we are confident that through a strong partnership we will emerge from this crisis stronger than ever.

Sincerely,



Peter B. King  
Chief Executive Officer