

United States Senate

March 20, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We urge you to use the authority vested in you by the Stafford Act to increase the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) federal cost share to 100% and authorize Individual Assistance (IA) in order to fight this global pandemic. It is vital that the federal government leverage all of its resources to help state and local governments fight to slow and stop the spread of COVID-19.

We appreciate the step you took last week in declaring the COVID-19 pandemic a national emergency, which enabled FEMA to assist communities to respond to COVID-19 through its PA program. Unfortunately, since the original emergency declaration made last week, cases have only grown more rapidly and the worst is likely still to come. Increasing the federal cost share of FEMA PA will allow state and local governments to focus solely on containing and mitigating the outbreak of the virus without having to be hamstrung by rising costs and limited budgets.

Raising the federal cost share is not an unprecedented step. During the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy in 2012 and the devastating Louisiana floods of 2016, the federal cost share was increased beyond 75%. Now as the entire nation faces the challenges of a global pandemic, we are asking that your administration unlock the full capacity of the federal government so that we can work on the frontlines to save lives and protect our most vulnerable populations.

During this time of crisis, it is important, now more than ever, that every level of government utilize all available resources to stem and curb the spread of COVID-19. Increasing the federal cost share for FEMA PA to 100% and unlocking IA for affected families are important steps that will help our nation combat this massive threat.



ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator

Sincerely,



BILL CASSIDY, M.D.
United States Senator

/s/

CHARLES E. SCHUMER
United States Senator



PATTY MURRAY
United States Senator



GARY C. PETERS
United States Senator

/s/

JACK REED
United States Senator



BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
United States Senator



MARGARET WOOD HASSAN
United States Senator

/s/

ROBERT P. CASEY, JR
United States Senator



TAMMY DUCKWORTH
United States Senator



RICHARD J. DURBIN
United States Senator



LISA MURKOWSKI
United States Senator



SHERROD BROWN
United States Senator



DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator



KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator



CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator



TAMMY BALDWIN
United States Senator




MICHAEL F. BENNET
United States Senator



JACKY ROSEN
United States Senator



JON TESTER
United States Senator



MAZIE K. HIRONO
United States Senator

/s/

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN
United States Senator



JEANNE SHAHEEN
United States Senator