



Board of County Commissioners

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May 21, 2020

The Honorable Michael Bennet
United States Senate
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC, 20510

Dear Senator Bennet,

We are writing today on behalf of the communities in our county that have been hit hard by COVID-19. As you know, the COVID pandemic does not respect state or county lines, nor the size of the community. Many of the Colorado counties experiencing the highest and fastest-growing rates of infection are our rural and frontier areas.

These areas with small populations have thus far been unable to access direct federal assistance through the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Fifty-nine of Colorado's 64 counties are currently ineligible to use these funds. We request that the Senate commit to providing federal assistance for all of Colorado's local governments.

Counties are on the frontline in the response to the COVID 19 crisis, and there's a surge in county services Coloradans need in this unprecedented time. In addition to increased service demands and revenue losses, counties are working hard to secure adequate medical supplies, PPE and test kits. All disasters are local – including public health disasters – and the cost of response and recovery are borne by local governments.

In Eagle County, we have provided funding of \$1.6 million to date for direct assistance to community members, knowing that our future budget outlook is dire given massive reductions in sales and property taxes. We didn't wait to provide funding, as our residents can't wait for food and shelter. Without access to resources, we are unable to help our business community and fear long-term negative consequences for our economy.

Colorado's rural communities and small towns are continuing to protect our communities and support the economic recovery that will be so critical. But we cannot do it alone. We ask that the Senate swiftly act to provide relief for our communities.

Time is of the essence. Responding to this public health crisis has been costly while the loss of tourism, and the closure of small businesses has had a devastating effect on our local economies.

We appreciate your partnership now and into the future. Please let us know if we can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

Eagle County Board of Commissioners

Kathy Chandler-Henry

Chair

Matt Scherr

Commissioner

Jeanne McQueeney

Commissioner