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March 3, 2021

Dear Senators:

We are writing as the Legislative Co-Chairs of the Pennsylvania Municipal League on behalf of Pennsylvania's municipalities to **express our strong support for President Biden's American Rescue Plan which contains an essential \$350 billion in aid to state and local governments.**

It is clear the COVID-19 pandemic will leave Pennsylvania with long-term, negative social and economic impacts that we will be living with for years to come: long-term unemployment, education gaps, financially devastated and closed businesses, increased mental health issues, addiction, eviction, and most tragically the loss of loved-ones.

Our local governments, which are on the frontlines of delivering emergency and essential services, have also borne the brunt of these negative effects. We have had to furlough workers, freeze hiring, freeze capital budgets and assume the increased costs of responding to COVID-19 while our own workers are exposed to the virus. We are deeply concerned that the negative effects of COVID-19 will leave a structural deficit on our public finances, as well as weaken the strength of our non-profit and business sectors. And, now we are being called upon to assist in the most important phase of all—vaccinating our residents.

In a recent survey of Pennsylvania's registered voters, nearly 65% favor federal aid going directly to local governments. (*G. Terry Madonna Opinion Research, February 2021*).

[We therefore appeal to you to adopt the President's Plan including the \\$350 billion in aid to state and local governments.](#) It is absolutely essential that this aid come **directly** to local governments and **be flexible** in its use, including assistance to address strained budgets and the social and economic impacts of the pandemic.

Any questions or comments can be directed to me at rschuettler@pml.org or Amy Sturges, Director of Governmental Affairs, at asturges@pml.org.

Sincerely,

Mayor Douglas Baker
Franklin, Pennsylvania
Legislative Co-Chair

Mayor Derek Slaughter
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Legislative Co-Chair