



May 14, 2020

Dear Members of Congress:

As Congress considers additional federal assistance packages in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical that you support direct relief to every city, borough, town, township and home rule community.

Communities throughout Pennsylvania are taking extraordinary measures to protect the health and safety of residents, including continuing essential services. Unfortunately, the fiscal consequences of COVID-19 are unprecedented and unbudgeted. The lost revenue to our local economies cannot be fully recouped through the local tax base.

Without a relief lifeline to recover and restore local economic activity, Pennsylvania's municipalities will have to make cuts to essential services and layoff local workers, including emergency first responders, sanitation workers, social service providers and others who keep our communities safe and moving forward during this difficult time.

Pennsylvania's municipalities are already seeing the effects of the crisis:

- West Chester is losing \$400,000 in revenue from metered parking that is not being enforced. 32 borough employees were laid off, eight were furloughed, and hours were reduced for one employee. (Source: Rettew, Bill. [“Shutdown causing West Chester to run low on cash.”](#) Daily Local News.)
- In Gettysburg all non-uniformed part-time employees are currently laid off. Key revenue sources have collapsed because of the statewide business-shutdown and stay-at-home orders. Other significant borough revenue sources, such as permit fees and taxes on earned income and overnight lodging, are all down to “essentially zero” because of the pandemic. (Source: Hayes, Alex. [“Layoffs possible for Gettysburg Borough staff.”](#) Gettysburg Times.)
- Easton is furloughing 81 city employees for more than three weeks as the coronavirus pandemic threatens \$5.5 million (17.6%) in revenue budgeted for 2020. (Source: Bresswein, Kurt. [“Easton furloughs 81 workers as coronavirus cuts \\$5.5M out of 2020 budget.”](#) LehighValleyLive.com.)
- Part-time employees of Bethlehem Township, Northampton County will be laid off from work until further notice.
- Lock Haven City Council moved to lay off 24 employees effective April 13. The employees include seven from Streets and Public Property maintenance, four from the city's water distribution operations, six full-time clerks, and seven part-time employees. (Source: [“City furloughs 24 employees.”](#) The Express.)

We know that you understand the importance of every city, borough, town, township and home rule community in the commonwealth and we hope that we can rely on your leadership to support legislation that includes:

- \$500 billion over two years of federal aid for local governments
- Fair and direct funding allocations to each and every local government, with no exclusions based on population
- Equal funding overall for municipal governments and county governments
- Maximum flexibility for the eligible use of funds to address the budget consequences of the COVID19 pandemic

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

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

Sincerely,



Mayor Matthew Pacifico, Altoona
President



Richard J. Schuettler
Executive Director