

Freeholders Encourage U.S. Leaders To Address County and Local Covid-19 Costs Next

Hunterdon County Freeholder Board Director Shaun C. Van Doren has called on top U.S. officials to support legislation providing financial assistance for government entities representing populations of less than 500,000, both county and local governments, groups that have not been included for aid in previous stimulus acts.

Van Doren forwarded letters to President Donald Trump, U.S. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin, and U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, on behalf of his Freeholder colleagues and Hunterdon County's municipal officials.

The Freeholder Board Director wrote, 'County and local governments throughout the nation, regardless of population size, have been forced to expend considerable sums for the costs associated with emergency and health response to the COVID-19 epidemic. Additionally, our governments have experienced a subsequent loss of revenues resulting from the shutdown of local economies.'

Van Doren pointed out, "Hunterdon County's Freeholders supported the latest stimulus action to continue to help small businesses, hospitals and greater funding for Covid-19 testing."

Van Doren's letter, which was copied to both of New Jersey's U.S. Senators, Bob Menendez and Cory Booker, and to Congressman Tom Malinowski, noted that Hunterdon's Freeholders have taken significant action. "In Hunterdon County, both the County government and our municipalities are doing more than most thought possible in response to the pandemic.

Our county budget will have no tax increase this year and the Freeholders have approved an expanded economic development municipal grant program.

The County has provided over one hundred thousand units of personal protection equipment for our local hospital, first responders, and long term care facilities, and Hunterdon County has joined with neighboring Somerset County, at our joint cost with no state or federal help, to offer a drive thru COVID-19 test site for our residents."

In conclusion, Van Doren told the federal officials, "Federal aid will be necessary for Hunterdon County and our municipal governments to continue the kind of effective response and support in which we have been engaged to date."