



March 10, 2022

The Honorable Dan Dockstader
President of the Wyoming Senate
Wyoming Senate
200 W. 24th St. Capitol Building, E201
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

Re: Veto of SF0098/SEAct No. 18/Senate File 98 – Federal emergency COVID-19 relief funding-limitations.

Dear President Dockstader:

I appreciate the efforts of the 66th Legislature to invest Wyoming's COVID-19 relief funds into sustainable programs with long-term benefits to Wyoming citizens. Senate Enrolled Act 20 represents a strategic legislative approach guided by the Executive Branch's recommendations, which were based on months of stakeholder engagement and proposal development. Our two branches have jointly worked to advance our shared principles to preserve opportunity, foster long-term resilience, and invest in our grandchildren.

While Senate Enrolled Act 20 reflects our shared vision, Senate Enrolled Act 18 is redundant and runs contrary to our partnership efforts to responsibly spend federal funding. Senate Enrolled Act 18 unnecessarily constrains the Governor's authority to expend funds on emergency programs. Experience has demonstrated that flexibility and adaptability are especially important given the ongoing economic hardships caused by the pandemic. Hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic do not end simply because I have declared an end to the Public Health Emergency. Latitude is advisable to wind down programs in an orderly way. Now is not the time for the Legislature to tie the hands of the Executive Branch to respond to the needs of our citizens.

Furthermore, Senate Enrolled Act 20, which I will sign, places reasonable spending restrictions on American Rescue Plan Act dollars. Thus, the limitations of Senate Enrolled Act 18 are both redundant and unnecessary.

We should continue our partnership in order to craft responsible spending plans for the federal funds directed to our state. Senate Enrolled Act 18 conflicts with the spirit of that partnership, and I am therefore vetoing it.

Sincerely,



Mark Gordon
Governor

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cc: The Honorable Secretary of State, Edward Buchanan
The Honorable Eric Barlow, Speaker of the House
Chief Clerk, Wyoming Senate
Chief Clerk, Wyoming House of Representatives