

Cities Are Essential Advocacy Talking Points

- Congress must help cities, towns, and villages stabilize local government operations, keep workers on the job, and increase services as necessary to rebuild the economy.
- It is appropriate and necessary for Congress to appropriate \$500 billion in direct, flexible funding to each and every local government over the next two or more years, to prevent the worst possible outcomes in the near term and provide the fiscal certainty and stability required to rebuild over the long term.
- Without federal assistance to address the unanticipated consequences of extraordinary measures to contain the spread of COVID-19, dire circumstances will force many local governments to lay off thousands of critical workers, including police officers, firefighters, sanitation workers, social service providers, crisis interventionists, and others. Some local governments will be forced to end operations and services altogether, through municipal dissolution.
- A fair and appropriate allocation of funding to each and every local government is achievable through a modified version of the formula used to distribute the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). This formula considers population alongside measures of poverty and housing instability, and sets aside 30% of overall funds for thousands of small and rural municipalities below 50,000 residents.
- Eligible expenditures should address a broad range of purposes, including public health, economic recovery, emergency payments on behalf of jeopardized residents, municipal budget revenue shortfalls as a result of closures due to coronavirus, and technical assistance to those ends.
- Cities are both the essential building blocks of a national economic recovery, and the solution to ensuring economic recovery is as short and successful as possible.