

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

March 17, 2020

The Honorable Peter T. Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Gaynor,

We write to you today to request that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provide clear guidelines to state, local, territorial, and tribal governments on the options available to them under the recently declared national emergency.

As you know, on Friday, March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump invoked Sec. 501(b) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (“the Stafford Act”) in response to the ongoing public health emergency presented by Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). This allows local governments at the state, county, and municipal level, as well as tribal and territorial governments, to access federal funds (at 75 percent Federal cost share) through the FEMA Public Assistance program as they take steps to contain this virulent disease. However, confusion on the ground is pervasive and many local agencies are unsure what is reimbursable under this section of the Stafford Act.

Many counties across Colorado have expressed frustration over what they perceive as a lack of clear guidance as to what actions are reimbursable under this national emergency declaration. While FEMA and other agencies have provided a few examples of what can be reimbursed – such as costs associated with activating State Emergency Operations Centers and the state National Guards – they have not provided specific examples for the local levels or clear guidelines on how to access these funds.

COVID-19 has become a global pandemic and a national crisis. It is critical that all levels of government are equipped with the information and resources needed to combat this novel coronavirus. For this reason, we are requesting that FEMA reach out to local governments (i.e., counties and municipalities) and provide them with the necessary information to make them aware of all of the resources and assistance available to them during this emergency.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you and other Federal, state, and local agencies to continue the fight against this deadly pathogen.

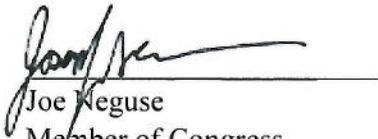
Sincerely,



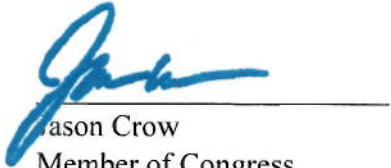
Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress



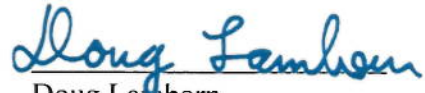
Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Scott R. Tipton
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress