



The Honorable Donald J. Trump
 President of the United States
 The White House
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
 Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin
 Secretary of the Treasury
 1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
 Washington, D.C. 20220

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
 Speaker of the House of Representatives
 United States House of Representatives
 1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
 Majority Leader of the Senate
 United States Senate
 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
 Minority Leader of the Senate
 United States Senate
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
 Minority Leader of the House of Representatives
 United States House of Representatives
 Washington, D.C. 20515

April 13, 2020

Dear Mr. President, Secretary Mnuchin, Madam Speaker, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

Thank you for your leadership in passing bipartisan legislation to address the urgent needs of the American people as we all confront the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

As written, the previous relief measures do not address several issues public agencies are facing, and we write to request federal aid and appropriations to public agencies to assist with the overwhelming economic impacts and unmet needs caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Our three primary requests are:

First, we ask that the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which was signed into law on March 18, 2020, be amended by striking Secs. 7001(e)(4) and 7003(e)(4) from H.R. 6201, and explicitly clarifying that state and local government employers and public agencies, including those exempt from 26 USC 3111, fully qualify for the Section 7001 and Section 7003 credits.

The reality of COVID-19 has created a need for many employees to stay at home, whether they or a loved one is ill, or they are at home to take care of a child whose school or daycare closed due to COVID-19. Congress's response was to create paid sick leave and additional family medical leave requirements for both public and private employers. Under the current legislation, however, only private employers will receive a tax credit against their payroll taxes to offset the costs for the paid-leave provisions in the Families First Act. Public agencies pay payroll taxes and are subject to the same costs as private employers. They should, therefore, be treated equally.

Second, we request a fund to provide aid to public agencies who are absorbing increased costs and losing revenue due to COVID-19. Recognizing that the needs for water and sanitation during this pandemic are particularly critical, public utility agencies are deferring shut-offs and are, in fact, turning services back on for constituents in their districts who find themselves unable to pay for these services at this time. When the current crisis passes, many customers will have racked up large, unpaid bills, and public utilities will be required to engage in massive shutoffs or absorb crippling revenue losses. A fund is necessary to allow for public agencies to apply for federal assistance for costs absorbed and revenues lost as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure there is no delay in distribution and that funds are available before it is time to resume normal collection procedures, resources should be made available directly to public agencies.

Third, we request funds be made available for infrastructure projects. An influx of dollars for infrastructure allows for jobs to be preserved and new ones created, while also ensuring that constituents have access to the water and wastewater infrastructure necessary for public health and safety. This can be accomplished through appropriations into the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI program, the EPA's WIFIA program, and the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Loan Funds. Additionally, the advance refunding of tax-exempt bonds should be reinstated. This measure was removed for bonds issued after 2017. Reinstatement would allow local governments and other qualified entities access to billions of dollars that could be reallocated and spent on other critical projects.

Thank you for taking the time to carefully consider these important issues of concern. We stand ready to provide any additional information needed to ensure these issues can be addressed in the next emergency appropriations package for public agencies.

Sincerely,



Brad Mattson
General Manager
Basin Irrigation Drainage Authority
Reclamation District No. 1500



Geoff Poole
General Manager
Borrego Water District



Hilary M. Straus
General Manager
Citrus Heights Water District



Jim Barrett
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