



April 6, 2020

Governor Jared Polis

State Capitol Bldg
200 E. Colfax, Rm 136
Denver, CO 80203

U.S. Senator Cory Gardner

400 Rood Ave, Fed Bldg., Ste 220
Grand Junction, CO 81501

U.S. Senator Michael F. Bennet

225 N 5th St #511
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Senator Kerry Donovan

200 E. Colfax, Rm 346
Denver, CO 80203

Rep. Julie McCluskie

200 E. Colfax, Rm 307
Denver, CO 80203

Steven T. Mnuchin

U.S. Dept of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20220

U.S. Congressman Scott Tipton

225 N 5th St #702
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Dylan Roberts, Esq.

Deputy District Attorney
200 E. Colfax, RM 307
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Stronger Together - Support for Fair Share of CARES Act funding

Dear Governor Polis, Senator Gardner, Senator Bennet, Senator Donovan, Representative McCluskie, Secretary Mnuchin, Congressman Tipton and Mr. Roberts, Esq.:

We write united. We reach out in unison. We care about the CARES Act. As guidance is developed for distribution of the funds, we emphasize our shared support and clear need for this legislation, particularly among our rural mountain communities where medical facilities are inundated, resources are scarce, business has declined and unemployment rates are high. We are all on the front lines dealing with significant economic impacts. The third iteration of the CARES Act provides small town America and most of Colorado cities and counties with no foreseeable relief from the immediate expenses that are being incurred for response.

Simple. Straightforward. Super quick. Similar to the effort to put checks in the hands of every American, consider allowing the locally elected governing body to put that money to use according to each city's needs and priorities based upon population. No further bureaucracy is needed. Send the check ASAP. The Single Audit Act will account for the expenditures just like it does for other federal grants. Flexibility of use, inclusivity of all local jurisdictions and speed of delivery will aid in us all #DoingMyPartCO.

The COVID-19 crisis is not only of a magnitude never before faced by cities, counties, states and the federal government, but the speed at which it is manifesting is unprecedented. Our basic function is to provide essential services. Secondary to that is our role in supporting one another for response and in filling the gaps that may occur in federal and state relief programs.

An emergency for a local disaster was declared by the City of Aspen on March 12, 2020. Our community and local economy is severely impacted by the county and state public health orders. Businesses have been forced to close, unemployment has spiked, and major summer events have been canceled. A successful response requires clear and constant communications, sound financial forecasting and prudent management of financial resources. We implore pushback for backfill of lost revenues. The City of Aspen anticipates a reduction of \$277M in sales and lodging tax base, translating into a City revenue shortfall of \$12.6M from 2019 actual receipts.

To ensure equitable distribution of funds, the City of Aspen would like to ensure local governments are reimbursed for all COVID-19 related expenses, including financial assistance. It is particularly important that those counties with a population under 500,000 are able to direct their funds within their respective communities. The CARES Act gives power to each state to distribute funding, therefore we want to ensure the rural areas get the funding, not just population centers.

As we engage and collaborate with surrounding western slope counties, the City of Aspen looks forward to engaging with Governor Polis with a clear understanding on how the equitable distribution funds from the federal stimulus package will trickle down to our cities and counties. Additionally, we offer our appreciation to those who have worked tirelessly to help protect Coloradans.

Recent communications with the US Treasury in anticipation of its guidance relative to release of funds is vital to our state. We trust you will stronghold the pulse on this measure as we approach the fourth rendition. We need reassurance and firm foundation that funding direction will aim to help bridge the revenue gap caused by COVID19 closures and/or be reimbursed for additional expenses incurred in response.

Our sincere gratitude to you all for your steadfast efforts in continuing to fine tune and support this legislation. Please continue to grind as your advocate for Coloradans at the Capital. As our state motto signifies on our territorial seal: "Nil Sine Numine": Nothing without the divine will.

Sincerely,



Torre, Mayor

Aspen City Council members: Ward Hauenstein (Mayor Pro Tem), Skippy Mesirow, Ann Mullins and Rachael Richards

cc: Benjamin Henderson benjamin.s.henderson@state.co.us
Stephanie Bennett stephanie.bennett@state.co.us