

December 18, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joe Manchin  
United States Senator  
306 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitt Romney  
United States Senator  
124 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
United States Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rob Portman  
United States Senator  
448 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
United States Senator  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy  
United States Senator  
520 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Special Districts Inclusion in Bipartisan State and Local Government COVID-19 Relief Bill**

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer, and Senators Manchin, Portman, Romney, Collins, Murkowski, and Cassidy,

On behalf of more than 30,000 special districts providing critical infrastructure, emergency response and community enrichment services to millions of Americans – including many of your constituents – we deeply appreciate the inclusion of special districts' access to state and local government COVID-19 relief, as proposed in the Senators Manchin, Portman, Romney, Collins, Murkowski and Cassidy's draft "Bipartisan State and Local Support and Small Business Protections Act."

While this is a major milestone for the nation's special districts (defined in the proposal as "special-purpose public entities"), **we must respectfully request clarification in language currently proposed to include "special-purpose public entities" in this access to ensure that communities depending on special districts to provide critical infrastructure and essential services are not again left out of the sorely needed state and local government pandemic relief.**

Specifically, the proposed text sets aside up to five percent of states' allocation to be reserved for "*special-purpose public entities [...] that perform essential public health and safety functions related to the COVID-19 pandemic*" and "*multi-state entities [...] involved in the transportation of passengers or cargo.*" **As drafted, this could lead to exclusion of – or create significant obstacles for** – special districts that provide communities with water, wastewater, irrigation, electricity and other public utilities, recreation and park, library, natural resource conservation, and mosquito abatement services, air quality management, and potentially districts essential to the nation's commerce that provide port, harbor, navigation and airport services.

Accordingly, **we respectfully request modification to the language in Sec. 602 (b)(2)(ii)(I) of the proposal to include independent special districts that provide any Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency ("CISA") designated "critical infrastructure sector" service as well as, where applicable, services states may consider to be essential during the pandemic, namely parks and recreation services necessary for**

**physical health and mental well-being as well as child-care and after-school services.** We urge you to consider adopting the language from the bipartisan S. 4308, the Special Districts Provide Essential Services Act, to provide certainty for these special districts' access relief funds.

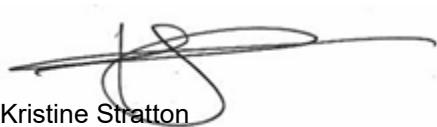
Given that special districts across the country have struggled to access Coronavirus Relief Fund (CARES Act) monies through their respective states, counties, or cities to date, we are *grateful* for the explicit inclusion of special districts in the "Coronavirus Local Community Stabilization Fund." This is especially significant for frontline emergency services and healthcare districts. We applaud your efforts to grant their access to this critical program while asking you to consider the same for all pandemic-impacted special districts able to demonstrate need to their respective states.

We look forward to working with you and your staff on this urgent issue for the special districts providing essential services to your communities and employing your constituent essential workers.

Sincerely,



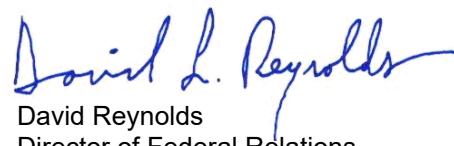
Peter Bonkrude  
President  
Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California



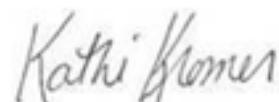
Kristine Stratton  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
National Recreation and Park Association



Mark Landauer  
Executive Director  
Oregon Public Ports Association



David Reynolds  
Director of Federal Relations  
Association of California Water Agencies



Kathi Kromer  
Associate Executive Director  
American Library Association



Peter M. Murphy  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
Illinois Association of Park Districts



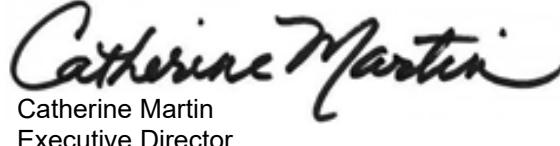
Dale Pierson  
Executive Director  
Rural Water Association of Utah



Ian Lyle  
Executive Vice President  
National Water Resources Association



Matthew Duarte  
Executive Director  
California Recreation and Park Districts



Catherine Martin  
Executive Director  
California Association of Healthcare Districts



Candy McCullough  
President  
National Association of Emergency and Fire Officials



Fire Chief Gary Ludwig  
President and Chairman of the Board  
International Association of Fire Chiefs



Rich Cowger  
President  
Montana Fire Chiefs Association



Barry Moline  
Executive Director  
California Municipal Utilities Association



Chief Steve Kovacs  
President  
Fire Districts Association of California



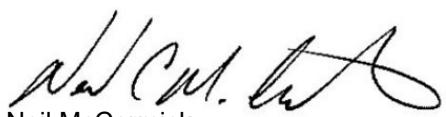
Joshua Green  
General Manager  
Cosumnes Community Services District



Chief Scott Frandsen  
President  
Missouri Association of Fire Chiefs



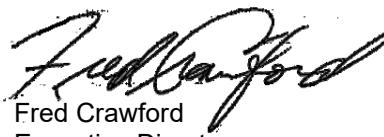
Fire Chief Michael O'Brian  
Past President  
Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs



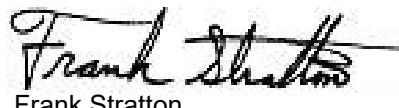
Neil McCormick  
Chief Executive Officer  
California Special Districts Association



Ann Terry  
Executive Director  
Special Districts Association of Colorado



Fred Crawford  
Executive Director  
Florida Association of Special Districts



Frank Stratton  
Executive Director  
Special Districts Association of Oregon



LeGrand Bitter  
Executive Director  
Utah Association of Special Districts

CC: Senator Kyrsten Sinema  
Congressman John Garamendi