



March 22nd, 2020

Dear local government official,

The current pandemic crisis of COVID-19 is straining the resources of local communities across Minnesota, jeopardizing our collective ability to safely deliver services in response. Minnesotans need the federal government to step in and help ensure our counties, cities and communities can safely and efficiently respond. We are asking elected officials to support several programs and protections for working people that will help keep communities safe.

First, we are asking you to support workers by pushing Congress to establish a robust general assistance grant program to states and municipalities for local communities. The federal government must provide each state with a grant equal to 7% of combined state and local government own source revenue collected in the previous fiscal year, which would total to at least \$175 billion. This stimulus would assist communities of all backgrounds and would prioritize the needs of workers over corporate interests, ensuring that working families can weather this pandemic despite not being able to leave their homes.

We also ask that you push to increase FMAP funding (the federal share of Medical Assistance) to assist states with the steep medical costs incurred by the virus. We also ask that this money be used to expand Medicaid nationwide to protect millions of vulnerable Americans that don't have access to affordable insurance.

Next, we need your support and power to push the Federal Reserve to buy non-federal municipal notes to target interest rates at the Federal Funds rate, which is 0%. Problems in the municipal bond market, where interest rates are rapidly rising and some issuers have cancelled sales, are an underreported challenge associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Congress also must require that every worker in America be protected by OSHA safety standards and protections if they work in a high-risk industry. All those that are designated healthcare, direct care, public safety, essential workers and all workers should have access to vital personal protective equipment (PPE) so we can keep ourselves and the public safe.

Finally, we ask that you push Congress to expand paid leave coverage for all employees. Without bearing the risk of losing their job, workers need to be afforded the ability to stay home if they or their family members have been exposed to COVID-19.

We urge you, on behalf of AFSCME Council 5, AFSCME Council 65, and all Minnesotans, to contact Senator Amy Klobuchar, Senator Tina Smith, and your Member of Congress and ask that they support workers in their local communities immediately.

Regards,



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Shannon Douvier
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