Senator Michael Bennet
Senator Cory Gardner
Representative Diana DeGette
Representative Doug Lamborn
Representative Ed Perlmutter
Representative Jason Crow
Representative Scott Tipton
Representative Joe Neguse
Representative Ken Buck

Re: Assistance with Fiscal Relief Funds for Cities and States

Dear members of the Colorado Congressional Delegation:

Thank you for your leadership and for your efforts in supporting our frontline response efforts with the passage of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The bipartisan partnership of the Colorado delegation is our strength, and that is why I am writing to request your immediate assistance in helping the City and County of Denver combat the growing local impacts from the COVID-19 outbreak.

Mayors across this nation, myself included, believe it was a lost opportunity when Congress could not reach agreement on the inclusion in the interim bill on emergency fiscal relief of sorely needed funds for cities and states. That is why I am asking that you redouble your efforts to reach an agreement as soon as possible. The impact on local budgets and local economies is only worsening as we continue to deal with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. On behalf of the people of Denver, I ask that you expeditiously pass legislation to provide direct financial aid to our communities for lost revenues and mounting expenses.

The people of Denver are resilient, and many are on the frontline of fighting this crisis. As Mayor, my administration is taking the necessary steps to keep our city safe by temporarily shuttering restaurants, bars, retail establishments and other venues where large groups of people could gather; closing schools; and issuing stay-at-home orders. These efforts to flatten the curve will undoubtedly save lives, and they are the necessary steps to take. But like cities across the country, the impact on local budgets and city finances is severe. Sales taxes, income taxes and user fees have dropped dramatically for local governments across the country. We depend on these revenues to fund essential city services — services that are critical to protecting the health and safety of our residents.

In addition, our spending on police, emergency response, fire, health care and other social programs continues to increase as we respond to this pandemic. We need direct federal aid for our loss of revenue. With state and local mandates to balance budgets, we will be forced to cut or eliminate essential services in the midst of a global pandemic. If our cities cannot provide basic services and recover, there will be no national economic recovery.
As Congress begins to engage on the next phase of a relief package, I strongly urge you to quickly provide direct local aid for lost revenue due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Our cities will need billions of dollars in direct aid to help fill this revenue gap. Municipalities across the United States need direct aid to maintain vital services such as police, fire and emergency response.

I appreciate the ongoing support of Congress and look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that our communities have the resources needed to protect the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Respectfully,

Michael B. Hancock
Mayor