

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2020

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

The Honorable David Bernhardt
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington D.C., 20240

Dear Secretaries Mnuchin and Bernhardt:

On behalf of the nearly 120 tribal governments in the state of California, we write to ask for your expeditious disbursement of the funds provided under Section 5001 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. It is the intent of Congress for this fund to support Tribal governments experiencing lost revenue due to depressed economic activity. This funding is critical to ensuring tribal governmental services remain intact, directly impacting the health and safety of Tribal members.

As you know, Congress provided tribal governments \$8 billion in the CARES Act to support expenditures associated with the COVID-19 public health emergency. This funding provides a critical lifeline to Tribes across the nation due to the nature of funding for Tribal governmental services.

Tribal government enterprises are foundationally distinct from commercial enterprises because these corporate revenues support essential governmental services, such as healthcare, law enforcement, and social services, which are more critical now than ever before. In addition, Tribal budgets are based almost exclusively on income from economic activity, not taxes. As a result, dramatic swings in revenue and spikes in expenses put Tribal governments in a particularly precarious position.

Without a tax base to call upon, tribal governmental services are uniquely vulnerable to the nearly complete disappearance of revenues as a result of the public safety measures taken to contain the spread of COVID-19. As such, this funding will provide tribal government employers the ability to maintain critical government services and continue supporting their workforce of nearly 65,000 individuals in our state.

It is our understanding that you will be conducting a joint consultation with tribal governments on April 2, and we wholeheartedly support your direct outreach to tribal governments. It is our hope that you will use the feedback you receive from that consultation, as well as the recommendations included in the attached letter from the National Congress of American Indians, to guide your expedited rulemaking and

disbursal of these funds. Thank you for your extraordinary efforts to protect our country and economy during this difficult time.

Sincerely,



Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress



Ken Calvert
Member of Congress

Letter also signed by:

- PETE AGUILAR
- NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGÁN
- JULIA BROWNLEY
- SALUD CARBAJAL
- TONY CÁRDENAS
- GILBERT R. CISNEROS, JR.
- COL. PAUL COOK, RET.
- J. LUIS CORREA
- JIM COSTA
- TJ COX
- ANNA G. ESHOO
- JARED HUFFMAN
- DOUG LAMALFA
- MIKE LEVIN
- TED LIEU
- ALAN LOWENTHAL
- TOM MCCLINTOCK
- JERRY MCNERNEY
- GRACE F. NAPOLITANO
- DEVIN NUNES
- SCOTT PETERS
- KATIE PORTER
- HARLEY ROUDA
- LINDA T. SANCHEZ
- MARK TAKANO
- MIKE THOMPSON
- NORMA J. TORRES
- JUAN VARGAS