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April 13, 2020

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta
United States House of Representatives
228 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: H.R. 6467 which provides \$250 billion in direct federal government aid to local governments with a population of less than 500,000

Dear Representative Panetta:

As the President and Legislative Action Committee Chair of the Cities Association of Santa Clara County, and as a member of the League of California Cities, we are writing to express support of H.R. 6467, the Coronavirus Community Relief Act and to urge you to cosponsor this bill. H.R. 6467 provides \$250 billion in direct aid from the federal government to local governments with a population of less than 500,000 as they face mounting challenges related to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

We write to you today, on behalf of the Cities Association of Santa Clara County which represents the 15 cities of the county. Since 1990, representatives from the 15 cities of Santa Clara County have been meeting monthly and collaborating on issues that affect each of us, striving to create a unified voice. The CASCC is comprised of the elected representatives of over 1.9 million Bay Area residents. Our diverse community includes cities with a few thousand residents to a large city with a million people.

The scale of this global crisis is unprecedented, and so is the scope of the local government response. California cities of all sizes are coordinating across jurisdictional lines, enacting emergency measures to slow the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, taking action to protect individuals and small businesses on the economic margins, while spending such sums as necessary to protect public health.

Cities Association of Santa Clara County applauds Congress on the passage of the CARES Act, which provides financial assistance to meet the immediate needs of individuals and small businesses, as well as \$150 billion in direct aid to states and local governments with a population greater than 500,000 to help offset the news costs directly related to the pandemic. However, given the population threshold, only four of California's 482 cities will receive this much needed aid. H.R. 6467 creates a path for the other 99.2 percent of the California cities that were shut out of the CARES Act to receive direct federal aid.

The Coronavirus Community Relief Act also addresses some other gaps not covered by the CARES Act. The proposed bill allows units of local government to use allocated funds to cover losses.

Section 601 of the CARES Act restricts use of funds to cover "necessary expenditures." Cities, towns, and villages will need federal assistance to persevere through the hardship resulting from rising costs and decreasing tax revenue and fees due to COVID-19. This change from the CARES Act will help local communities deal with revenue shortfalls that will happen as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

The Coronavirus Community Relief Act also provides the necessary flexibility on how allocated funds can be used. If one city needs more funds that it is allocated while another city does not need all of its allocated funds, funds can be reallocated among cities within a state to ensure funds are put their best use. This is a change from the CARES Act.

Finally, the Coronavirus Community Relief Act changes the rule regarding when a city, town, or village must certify in order to receive funds. Instead of placing a burdensome "shot clock" by which cities, towns, and villages must apply, this legislation allows more time for an applicant to request funds. Smaller cities and towns are facing unprecedented challenges and could be facing layoffs. In this environment, a "shot clock" to apply puts unneeded pressure on smaller communities in crisis. California's local leaders are on the frontlines of responding to the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in their communities doing what is necessary to ensure the health and safety of their residents and will continue to be for some time. I urge you to support and cosponsor H.R. 6467 to ensure they have the resources to maintain the essential services their residents need, especially in this moment.

To co-sponsor the bill, please contact Bo Morris in the office of Rep. Joe Neguse at Bo.Morris@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



Larry Klein
President, CASCC
Mayor, City of Sunnyvale



Neysa Fligor
Legislative Action Chair, CASCC
Vice Mayor, Los Altos

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