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General Assembly  
State of Colorado  
Denver

July 31, 2020

The Honorable Michael Bennet  
United State Senator

The Honorable Cory Gardner  
United States Senator

The Honorable Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

The Honorable Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress

The Honorable Scott Tipton  
Member of Congress

The Honorable Ken Buck  
Member of Congress

The Honorable Doug Lamborn  
Member of Congress

The Honorable Jason Crow  
Member of Congress

The Honorable Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress

Dear Members of the Colorado Congressional Delegation:

We deeply appreciate your dedication to our state and determined advocacy on behalf of our communities as Congress crafts its latest, and potentially final, coronavirus relief package. The federal resources you have secured to date have served as an essential lifeline for our communities, mitigating the impact of crippling budget cuts to our schools, universities, public health departments and local governments. Yet without further Congressional action, our state will have to reduce services for those who need them the most while thousands of Coloradans lose the economic assistance that has sustained them through this crisis so far.

We write to you to urge swift passage of a coronavirus relief package that first and foremost includes significant and flexible aid to state and local governments, to help preserve core functions and services for Coloradans amidst the budget crisis. We also hope to see an extension of critical unemployment insurance benefits, nutrition benefits, housing assistance, small business support, resources for schools and funding to expand COVID-19 testing and contact tracing. We firmly believe that the proposal released this week by the Senate falls short of meeting the needs of our state in this pivotal moment, and we appeal to you to keep working to incorporate these critical components.

This year, we had to make significant cuts to the state's budget to close a \$3.3 billion deficit. These cuts have been painful, and the next few years will be even harder, as many of the reductions were one-time cuts that will not be available to lawmakers in the future. Furthermore, some of the most significant reductions were absorbed by institutions that received federal aid, which helped cushion some of the impact of the cuts. Failing to provide additional support would undoubtedly exacerbate our state's devastating budget crisis and pull the rug out from under our school districts, local governments, and universities who would feel the full brunt of potentially even deeper cuts next year. To meet the needs of our state, the next coronavirus relief package must include at least \$500 billion in flexible aid to states and additional funding for local governments, K-12 education and higher education.

As lawmakers, we have all seen first hand the devastation this pandemic has had on our communities. If Congress does not boost the federal pandemic response and renew key programs, such as expanded unemployment insurance, we fear that the consequences borne by hardworking Coloradans will only be exacerbated. The legislature has taken swift action to direct federal resources to help Coloradans pay their rent, mortgage and utility bills and to support our small businesses, but this funding will not be enough.

The next coronavirus relief package must also include additional housing, utility and small business assistance to bolster our state's successful relief programs and stimulate our economy. Congress should increase Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits by 15 percent, as more and more Colorado families rely on food pantries and nonprofit assistance. With many Coloradans struggling financially, the demand for these key programs has never been higher. We know Colorado can channel additional assistance directly to businesses and hardworking families to help them make ends meet, but we need Congress to act.

Hundreds of thousands of Coloradans are agonizing over their financial future, and many are within days or weeks of being unable to pay their bills or losing their homes. We urge you once again to take swift action on behalf of our state to deliver a coronavirus relief package that meets the needs of our communities.

Signed:

Rep. Jeni Arndt, District 53  
Rep. KC Becker, District 13  
Rep. Adrienne Benavidez, District 32  
Rep. Shannon Bird, District 35  
Rep. Janet Buckner, District 40  
Rep. Bri Buentello, District 47  
Rep. Yadira Caraveo, District 31  
Rep. James Coleman, District 7

Sen. Jeff Bridges, District 26  
Sen. Jessie Danielson, District 20  
Sen. Kerry Donovan, District 5  
Sen. Steve Fenberg, District 18  
Sen. Rhonda Fields, District 29  
Sen. Mike Foote, District 17  
Sen. Leroy Garcia, District 3  
Sen. Joann Ginal, District 14  
Sen. Julie Gonzales, District 34

Rep. Lisa Cutter, District 25  
Rep. Monica Duran, District 24  
Rep. Daneya Esgar, District 46  
Rep. Tony Exum, Sr., District 17  
Rep. Meg Froelich, District 3  
Rep. Alec Garnett, District 2  
Rep. Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez, District 4  
Rep. Matt Gray, District 33  
Rep. Leslie Herod, District 8  
Rep. Edie Hooton, District 10  
Rep. Dominique Jackson, District 42  
Rep. Sonya Jaquez-Lewis, District 12  
Rep. Chris Kennedy, District 23  
Rep. Cathy Kipp, District 52  
Rep. Tracy Kraft-Tharp, District 29  
Rep. Susan Lontine, District 1  
Rep. Julie McCluskie, District 61  
Rep. Barbara McLachlan, District 59  
Rep. Jovan Melton, District 41  
Rep. Dafna Michaelson Jenet, District 30  
Rep. Kyle Mullica, District 34  
Rep. Dylan Roberts, District 26

Sen. Chris Hansen, District 31  
Sen. Pete Lee, District 11  
Sen. Dominick Moreno, District 21  
Sen. Brittany Pettersen, District 22  
Sen. Robert Rodriguez, District 32  
Sen. Tammy Story, District 16  
Sen. Nancy Todd, District 28  
Sen. Angela Williams, District 33  
Sen. Faith Winter, District 24  
Sen. Rachel Zenzinger, District 19

Rep. Jonathan Singer, District 11  
Rep. Emily Sirota, District 9  
Rep. Marc Snyder, District 18  
Rep. Tom Sullivan, District 37  
Rep. Kerry Tipper, District 28  
Rep. Brianna Titone, District 27  
Rep. Alex Valdez, District 5  
Rep. Donald Valdez, District 62  
Rep. Mike Weissman, District 36  
Rep. Steven Woodrow, District 6  
Rep. Mary Young, District 50