

August 4, 2020

The Honorable Kate Brown
Senate President Peter Courtney
Speaker of the House Tina Kotek
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Dear Governor Brown, President Courtney, and Speaker Kotek,

On behalf of Lane County, the City of Eugene and the City of Springfield, we ask that the inequitable distribution of the local share of the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) dollars be addressed and that local governments receive the full funding available to them per the guidance issued by the US Treasury, “...States should transfer funds to local governments with populations of 500,000 or less, using as a benchmark the per capita allocation formula that governs payments to larger local governments (45%). This approach will ensure equitable treatment among local governments of all sizes.”¹

Per the US Treasury guidance, \$625 million of the state’s \$1.39 billion should be distributed directly to local governments and those funds should not be further restricted beyond what is in the guidance.² Of the first \$200 million that was authorized by the Joint Emergency Board as part of a reimbursement process, Lane County has received \$16.1 million, the City of Eugene has received \$7.8 million, and the City of Springfield has received \$2.4 million. Looking at these figures as a per capita amounts—\$41/person in Lane County, \$46/person in Eugene, \$37/person in Springfield—it becomes very clear that these fall far short of the \$178/person received by the City of Portland that can be spent at the direction of their local government. This means that Portland has been able to address the needs of their community with more funds per person and with fewer restrictions, developing programs and supports that are critical but unobtainable in our communities. We believe that this inequity needs to be addressed for local governments across Oregon and, specifically, those here in Lane County.

On Wednesday, August 5, the Joint Emergency Board will consider the allocation of a second \$200 million to local governments for costs associated with contact tracing and personal protective equipment. We believe that this is a missed opportunity to address the inequitable distribution to date. These funds, and any funds intended for local governments, should be distributed directly to local governments (*there already exists the workgroup created, agreed upon framework*) rather than directed to specific investments that continue to limit the degree to which they can respond to the individual needs of their communities around testing, housing, sheltering and economic recovery.

¹ <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>, July 8, 2020 version, page 7.

² <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>, July 8, 2020 version, page 11.

Local governments must be able to distribute funds based on the specific needs of their individual communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We understand that these are unprecedented times with challenging economic realities. As we work together to respond to this crisis and plan for recovery, the state should be partnering with local governments to ensure what resources we have are equitably distributed and meet the needs of our communities.

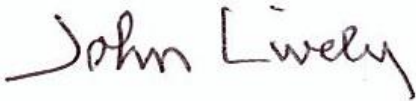
Sincerely,



Representative Marty Wilde
District 11



Senator Floyd Prozanski
District 4



Representative John Lively
District 12



Senator Lee Beyer
District 6



Representative Julie Fahey
District 14



Senator James Manning
District 7

Cc: Members of the Joint Emergency Board