

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing county governments across the nation, thank you for your leadership efforts on the Interim Emergency COVID-19 Relief Act. This package would provide much-needed assistance by enhancing coronavirus relief assistance for state and local governments. We are extremely appreciative that you included “lost revenue” as an eligible use of funds, both as part of Sec. 601 of the CARES Act and as part of your new preliminary proposal for additional state and local aid.

Overall, we are very supportive of your efforts because counties are overwhelmingly the unit of local government responding to this crisis. Nationwide, counties operate nearly 1,000 public hospitals, 1,900 local public health departments, more than 800 long-term care facilities and 750 behavioral health departments. We are also responsible for emergency operations centers, human services, jail management, 911 services, veterans’ services and the “last of the first responders” with coroners and medical examiners, among many other essential county functions. Counties have already expended billions of dollars responding to this pandemic and will remain on the frontlines as we prepare for difficult weeks and months ahead.

We strongly urge Congress to allocate resources directly to counties as most states mandate the implementation of public health and emergency response responsibilities to county governments. Given the reality of the unprecedented resources counties need for COVID-19 response, **we respectfully ask you to modify your use of the traditional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) formula in the Interim Emergency COVID-19 Relief Act.**

The CDBG formula was not designed to allocate funds in a public health emergency. While we agree that the HUD CDBG framework is among one of the best, most efficient ways to award federal aid directly and as a pass-through to local governments, ***the traditional formula is based on low-to-moderate housing and community development conditions.*** Under the context of the COVID-19 public health and overall economic crisis, we strongly urge you to develop a more balanced allocation method that takes into consideration both the skyrocketing costs and declining revenues for America’s county governments.

Let us be clear that we understand and support the important roles and pressures facing both cities and counties. Our ultimate goal is to establish a fair and equitable formula that would create a “win-win” situation for all local governments. Unfortunately, the CDBG formula creates immense disparities and fails to take into consideration both the overall population served and the frontline responsibilities of counties.

Finally, as counties spend more and more responding to this public health crisis, we believe that more than \$150 billion will be required to protect our residents and continue administering public services. **Expanding the overall amount of relief to local governments to \$250 billion, as proposed now in the House and Senate, would help to ease the disparity between counties and cities and provide counties with the resources we need to fight against COVID-19 into the summer and beyond.**

Again, we are thankful for your incredible leadership and focus on the overwhelming needs and challenges facing state and local governments. We also appreciate your recognition of the challenges that we face

with both mounting costs and declining revenues. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further with your team. We are committed to a solution that helps our nation mitigate, respond and recover from these historic times.

Sincerely,

Association of County Commissions of Alabama

Alaska Municipal League

Arizona Association of Counties

Arizona County Supervisors Association

Association of Arkansas Counties

California State Association of Counties

Colorado Counties, Inc.

Florida Association of Counties

Association County Commissioners of Georgia

Idaho Association of Counties

Illinois State Association of Counties

Association of Indiana Counties

Iowa State Association of Counties

Kansas Association of Counties

Police Jury Association of Louisiana

Maryland Association of Counties

Michigan Association of Counties

Association of Minnesota Counties

Mississippi Association of Supervisors

Missouri Association of Counties

Montana Association of Counties

Nebraska Association of County Officials

Nevada Association of Counties

New Jersey Association of Counties

New Mexico Counties

New York State Association of Counties

North Carolina Association of County
Commissioners

North Dakota Association of Counties

County Commissioners Association of Ohio

Association of Oregon Counties

County Commissioners Association of
Pennsylvania

South Carolina Association of Counties

South Dakota Association of County Officials

Tennessee County Services Association

Texas Association of Counties

Utah Association of Counties

Virginia Association of Counties

Washington State Association of Counties

West Virginia Association of Counties

County Commissioners' Association of West
Virginia

Wisconsin Counties Association

Wyoming County Commissioners Association

COUNTIES MATTER: COVID-19



America's counties are on the front lines of our nation's response to the coronavirus pandemic. During this unprecedented public health emergency and the aftermath of an economic crisis, counties are committed to strong intergovernmental cooperation to mitigate COVID-19 and its far-reaching impacts on America's people and places.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

- **Counties support 903 hospitals, 824 long-term care facilities and over 1,900 public health departments**
- In **26 states**, counties are required to provide health care for low-income, uninsured or underinsured residents
- Counties contribute to the non-federal share of Medicaid in **26 states**. Of these states, **18 mandate counties to contribute to the non-federal share of Medicaid costs** and/or administrative, program, physical health and behavioral health costs
- Local governments, mostly counties, contribute **\$28 billion to the non-federal share of Medicaid annually**
- Mandated county contributions are the highest in New York. Counties in New York and New York City send **over \$7 billion per year – or \$140 million per week** – to the state for Medicaid costs
- **75 percent** of federal funding used by counties in FY 2014-2016 was for health and human services

HUMAN SERVICES

- In at least 10 states that represent at least a third of the U.S. population, counties are responsible for administering federal human service programs, such as **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the child welfare system and the Child Care and Development Block Grant**
- Counties invest **\$58 billion** annually in federal, state and local dollars on human services programs
- As **unemployment numbers skyrocket**, county residents will turn to human services agencies in unprecedented numbers to access safety net programs. At the same time, **general revenue funds** – which counties often use to supplement federal and state funding for human services programs – **are declining dramatically**

COUNTY MANAGEMENT

- **Led by 40,000 county elected officials, counties employ 3.6 million people, or 1 percent of the entire U.S. population**
- Every two years during elections, counties fund and oversee more than **100,000 polling places**

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

- Counties typically operate **911 call centers**, county **Emergency Operations Centers** and emergency planning and response functions
- Counties provide essential public safety services from **law enforcement to fire and rescue** to even **coroners and medical examiners**
- Counties operate **91 percent of all local jails**, with **11 million total admissions** nationally each year, and an average daily jail population of **750,000 inmates**
- Counties invest **\$35 billion annually in 3,041 police and sheriffs' departments**, mostly with local funds

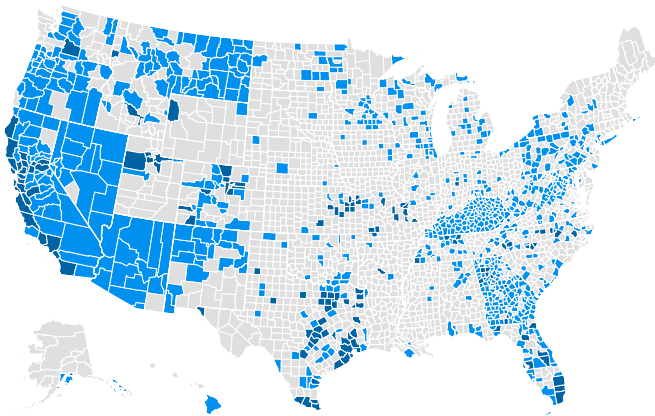
TRANSPORTATION

- Counties directly support **34 percent** of the nation's public airports
- Counties support **78 percent** of public transit systems that connect people, communities and economies
- Counties own **45 percent** of public road miles and **40 percent** of the nation's bridges
- Counties invest **\$134 billion** in the construction of infrastructure, maintenance and operation of public works, such as roads and bridges, wastewater and stormwater systems, county hospitals, courthouses, jails and other public facilities
- To fund and finance infrastructure, counties use a combination of **federal, state and local dollars, including user fees and tax-exempt municipal bonds**

Visit www.NACo.org/Coronavirus to find the latest **county-level data**

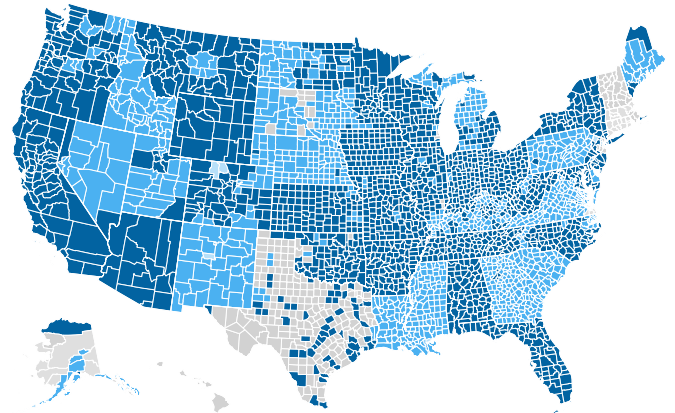
County Declarations and Policies in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

- County with an emergency declaration
- County with a safer-at-home or business closure policy
- No known local policy



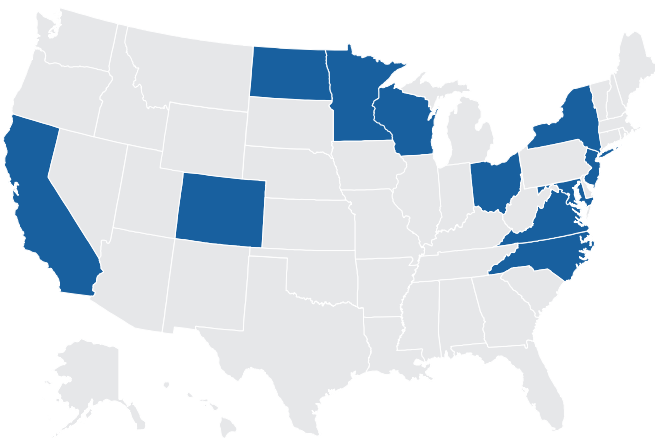
County Supported Local Health Departments (LHDs)

- County LHD
- Multi-county / city-county LHDs
- Multiple county supported LHDs
- No county supported LHD



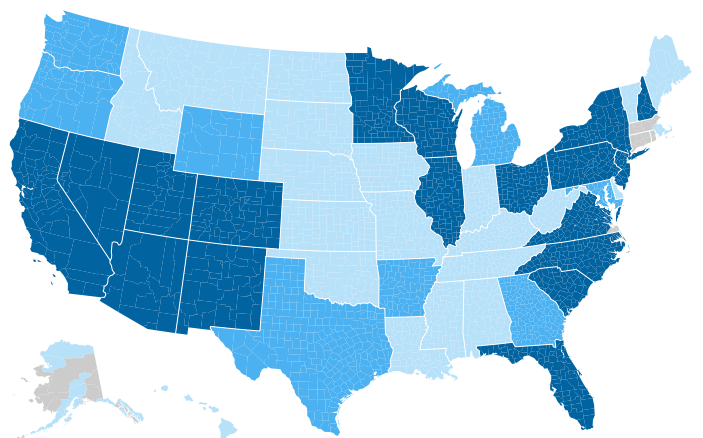
Counties administer TANF in 10 states

- County administered
- Non-County administered



Medicaid contribution mandates for counties

- State-mandated contribution
- Contribution, not state-mandated
- No contribution



NACo's County Explorer COVID-19 maps include:

- County declarations and policies
- Key demographic information
- Hospital numbers
- Local health departments
- Nursing homes
- ...and more.

