

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 13, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President-elect  
1401 Constitution Ave N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear President-elect Biden:

We write to urge you to take immediate action upon assuming office to grant pending requests to waive the 25% non-federal cost share requirement for FEMA assistance related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Notwithstanding the assistance provided under the CARES Act, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2021, and other federal relief packages, state, local, and tribal governments continue to struggle to meet the fiscal challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, most states and leading national organizations, including the National Governors Association, National Conference of State Legislatures, National League of Cities, National Association of Counties, the United States Conference of Mayors, and the Council of State Governments, have requested or supported relief from FEMA's cost share requirements.

We were heartened in recent weeks by your reaffirmation that you intend to provide 100% federal cost share for National Guard personnel who are operating under Title 32 mission assignments in response to the pandemic. That is an appropriate and welcome step for those states that have relied on the National Guard in this effort. It would be similarly appropriate to extend relief for all FEMA assistance provided in the course of the pandemic and to consider cost share relief for other federally declared disasters that occurred in 2020.

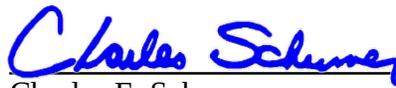
COVID-19 has upended life for many Americans, and state, local, and tribal governments have faced the dual challenges of unexpected costs and declining revenues. Increasing the federal cost share for FEMA assistance will give them the budgetary space to effectively respond to the ongoing health and economic hardship the pandemic has created.

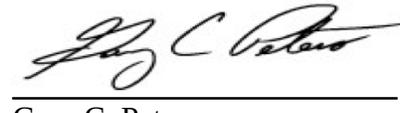
As you know, only one official -- the President -- has the authority to increase the federal cost share for disaster assistance. Because the Trump Administration has so far ignored numerous requests for this relief, we request that you exercise that authority as expeditiously as possible once you are in a position to do so.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with you on this and other matters.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jack Reed  
United States Senator

  
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Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

  
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Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

  
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Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

  
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Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator

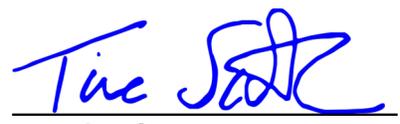
  
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Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator

/s/ Dianne Feinstein  
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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Murphy  
United States Senator

  
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Tina Smith  
United States Senator

  
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Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator

  
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Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



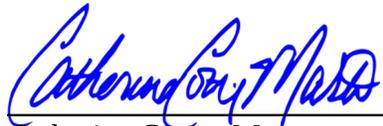
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Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator



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Patrick Leahy  
United States Senator



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Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator

/s/ Brian Schatz

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Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



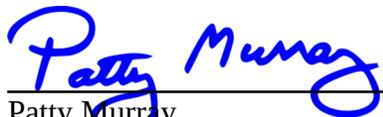
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Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



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Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



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Patty Murray  
United States Senator



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Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



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Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



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Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



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Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



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Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



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Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

/s/ Robert Menendez

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Robert Menendez  
United States Senator



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Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



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Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



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Ben Ray Luján  
United States Senator



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Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator

/s/ Cory A. Booker

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Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator

/s/ Elizabeth Warren

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Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator

/s/ Edward J. Markey

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Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator