



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES  
OF CALIFORNIA

April 17, 2020

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Member, United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Coronavirus Community Relief Act - SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to express our strong support for your “Coronavirus Community Relief Act,” (Act) which would provide \$250 billion in stabilization funds directly to counties and cities with a population of 500,000 or less that are struggling amidst the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

RCRC is an association of thirty-seven rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from those member counties. We continue to applaud your work on behalf of California’s rural counties, including the Secure Rural Schools program, the Payments in Lieu of Taxes program, and efforts to promote safe and sustainable water delivery - to name just a few. Your recognition of the need for direct payments to low-population counties during this pandemic reflects your decades understanding of our role in providing services to both rural residents as well as those who come to rural parts of the state to recreate.

With all but a handful of members, RCRC’s membership consists of counties which have less than 500,000 residents. Like their larger neighbors, RCRC-member counties face enormous costs while responding to the COVID-19 pandemic – whether they have zero confirmed cases, a small number of cases or an unfortunately large volume. This work is essential to keeping California’s rural residents safe while stopping the spread of COVID-19. These vital services are being provided while counties are facing significant reductions in revenue. RCRC member counties are unanimous in stating that, without direct and immediate stabilization funding, smaller counties will be unable to continue providing these critical county services at any meaningful rate in which they are currently performing.

1215 K Street, Suite 1650, Sacramento, CA 95814 | [www.rcrcnet.org](http://www.rcrcnet.org) | 916.447.4806 | Fax: 916.448.3154

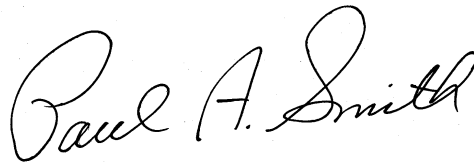
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The recently enacted CARES Act directs monies directly to counties (and cities within) with populations in excess of 500,000 under the current CDBG formula. Counties of less than 500,000 must obtain allocations through the State of California, which is currently through the Department of Housing and Community Development. Your legislation ensures that all communities, including localities with a population of 500,000 or less, receives direct stabilization funds to address the outbreak as well as recover once the public health emergency has passed.

As you well know, counties in California are the entities that are most impacted by front-line activities to prepare for and respond to the pandemic. This is in the form of running Public Health Departments, processing and relocating jail inmates, providing police services through the County Sheriff's office and assisting with social services eligibility due to the economic fallout from the pandemic. As such, the overwhelming share of any subsequent low-population municipal funding should be forwarded directly to counties. We respectfully ask that any future legislation enacted in the coming weeks recognize and prioritize this reality.

RCRC appreciates your legislation for promoting relief funds to rural counties. If you should have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at [psmith@rcrcnet.org](mailto:psmith@rcrcnet.org) or (916) 447-4806, or RCRC's legislative advocate in Washington D.C., Sheryl Cohen at [cohen@acg-consultants.com](mailto:cohen@acg-consultants.com) or (202) 327-8100.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul A. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL A. SMITH  
Senior Vice President Governmental Affairs

cc: The Honorable Kamala Harris, Member of the U.S. Senate  
Matt Chase, National Association of Counties