

July 15, 2020

Honorable Members of the Texas Delegation:

We are pleased that in light of the continued public health, economic and fiscal challenges our nation faces, there appears to be a growing bipartisan consensus that Congress should enact a fifth coronavirus relief bill by the end of this month. As you work on that fifth measure, we want to once again thank you for all you have done to address the COVID-19 pandemic and the related economic and fiscal crisis. Congress has taken swift and bold action commensurate with the scope of the crisis and we appreciate your efforts to help our nation address this challenge. Unfortunately, as the virus surges once again in Texas, more federal assistance will be needed for the state and its cities to weather the unprecedented economic downturn we face. As such, we want to reiterate our urgent request that you quickly pass an additional measure that includes *direct and flexible fiscal assistance to all cities* across the nation.

The budget calamity looming over local governments is real and it requires extraordinary measures. As the numbers recently released by Comptroller Hegar illustrate, Texas is not immune from this pain. He just reported a \$650 million decrease in tax revenue over the past month and \$5.7 billion since the pandemic began, with June sales tax revenue 6.5 percent below the June 2019 level. Please note that these numbers largely predate the recent COVID-19 surge. We therefore fear that state and local revenue is going to take time to rebound. We also fear that if we do not stabilize our economy, we could see a drop in property tax revenue next year.

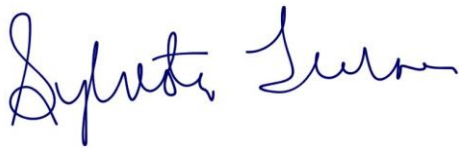
All of our cities are facing this devastating reduction in revenue through no fault of our own. In addition, we are facing this fiscal crisis at the same time we are facing major public health and public safety challenges, leading to an exponential increase in demand for our services, especially on the public health and safety front. Texas cities are major employers that provide core local government services to tens of millions of Texans that are critical to public health, safety, and welfare and that serve as the foundation of our economy. However, we are all mandated to balance our budgets; absent direct and flexible assistance, we will be forced to cut our workforce and reduce services, exacerbating the economic and public health crises created by this pandemic. Indeed, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that state and local governments have already cut 1.6 million jobs since the pandemic began, including 91,000 in Texas. With the pandemic still with us, we fear that those numbers will only get worse without direct fiscal assistance, leading to a drag on economic recovery and hurting efforts to safely reopen our economy.

There is broad support for direct fiscal assistance to local governments. Federal Reserve Board Chairman Jerome Powell has endorsed it in testimony to Congress and in other public remarks. Closer to home, Dallas Federal Reserve Bank President Robert Kaplan has also voiced support for fiscal assistance to state and local governments. In addition, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and many other national organizations have called for fiscal assistance to state and local governments.

Texas metropolitan areas account for 93.1 percent of the Texas economy. Vibrant metropolitan areas with strong, fiscally stable local governments will be key to managing the reopening of the Texas economy successfully and safely. Simply put, it will be impossible to have fiscally stable local governments without direct and flexible fiscal assistance from the federal government.

Thank you again for your efforts during this unprecedented time and for your attention to our request. We are confident that, working together, our nation can overcome this crisis.

Sincerely,



Sylvester Turner, Mayor
City of Houston



Ron Nirenberg, Mayor
City of San Antonio



Steve Adler, Mayor
City of Austin



Eric Johnson, Mayor
City of Dallas



Betsy Price, Mayor
City of Fort Worth



Dee Margo, Mayor
City of El Paso



Jeff Williams, Mayor
City of Arlington



Joe McComb, Mayor
City of Corpus Christi



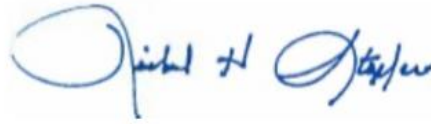
Dan Pope, Mayor
City of Lubbock



Ron Jensen, Mayor
City of Grand Prairie



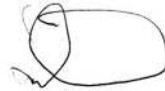
Pete Saenz, Mayor
City of Laredo



Rick Stopher, Mayor
City of Irving



Chris Watts, Mayor
City of Denton



Joe Zimmerman, Mayor
City of Sugar Land



Jose Segarra, Mayor
City of Killeen



Kyle Deaver, Mayor
City of Waco



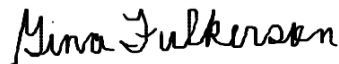
Connie Schroeder, Mayor
City of Bastrop



Trey Mendez, Mayor
City of Brownsville



Gaylynn Burris, Mayor
City of Bowie



Gina Fulkerson, Mayor
City of Wimberley



Tammy Dana-Bashian, Mayor
City of Rowlett



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City of Duncanville



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City of Sulphur Springs



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Shelley Brophy, Mayor
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Emmanuel Wealthy, Mayor
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Clyde C. Hairston, Mayor
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Andrew S. Friedberg, Mayor
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Stephen L. Santellana, Mayor
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Henry Wilson

Henry Wilson, Mayor
City of Hurst

Donald Baird

Donald Baird, Mayor
City of Colmesneil

Kenny Phillips

Kenny Phillips, Mayor
City of Mobile City

BJ McGinnis

BJ McGinnis, Mayor
City of Blanket

Terri W. Brown

Terri W. Brown, Mayor
City of Marshall

Sergio Coronado

Sergio Coronado, Mayor
City of Hidalgo

*Sara Post Meyer
Mayor, City of Cuero*

Sara Post, Mayor
City of Cuero

Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez

Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez, Mayor
City of Pharr

Rodger Brown

Rodger Brown, Mayor
City of Clyde



Cathy Skurow, Mayor
City of Portland



Michael Byrum-Bratsen, Mayor
City of Iowa Colony



Jane Hughson, Mayor
City of San Marcos



Dr. Ianthia Fisher, Mayor
City of Crockett

Travis Hall

Travis Hall, Jr., Mayor
City of Pleasanton



Pam Gosline, Mayor
City of Vernon

Joe Passanisi

Joe Passanisi, Mayor Pro Tem
City of Ravenna



Victor A. Contreras, Mayor
City of Marion



Laura Bianco, Mayor
Laura Bianco, Mayor
City of Dalworthington Gardens

Sharion R. Scott

Sharion R. Scott, Mayor
City of Wolfe City

Celestino A. Zambrano

Celestino A. Zambrano, Mayor
City of Gregory

Terrill Bartlett

Terrill Bartlett, Mayor
City of Canadian



Cathy Young, Mayor
City of Chillicothe



Roy McDonald, Mayor
City of West Orange

Wyman Williams

Wyman Williams, Mayor
City of Commerce



Cyndie Rathburn, Mayor
Town of Rancho Viejo

Anita R. Rodriguez

Anita R. Rodriguez, Mayor
City of Yoakum



John Packer, Mayor
City of Marble Falls



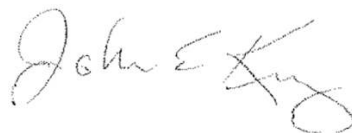
David Dreiling, Mayor
City of Greenville

Willie Leal

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Manuel V. Baeza, Mayor
City of Marfa



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City of Rockdale

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Jim McInnis, Mayor
City of Hamilton



Benjamin Gomez, Mayor
City of San Benito

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David Rutledge, Mayor
City of Bridge City



Antonio Araujo, Mayor

Antonio Araujo, Mayor
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Allyson Crenshaw

Allyson Crenshaw, Mayor
City of Robert Lee

Mark Groneman

Mark Groneman, Mayor
City of Vega

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C.W. Williams, Mayor
City of Wells

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Vicki Sanson

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City of Todd Mission

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Bruno J. Lozano, Mayor
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Suzanne de Leon

Suzanne de Leon, Mayor
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Caroline Wadzeck, Mayor
City of Dayton



Bob Sims, Mayor

Bob Sims, Mayor
City of Breckenridge

Lisa B. Pierce

Lisa B. Pierce, Mayor
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Ed Tidwell, Mayor
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Lynn Scott

Lynn Scott, Mayor
City of Panorama Village

Carl Marino

Carl Marino, Mayor
City of Fayetteville

Stephen Alonis

Stephen Alonis, Mayor
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Cheryl Sanders, Mayor
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Becky Ames

Becky Ames, Mayor
City of Beaumont



Cary Preston, Mayor
City of Childress



Thurman Bill Bartie, Mayor
City of Port Arthur

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Sandy Cox, Mayor
City of Lakeway

Mike Hendricks

Mike Hendricks, Mayor
City of Luling

Tim Handren

Tim Handren, Mayor
City of Boerne

Clinton Sawyer

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City of Amherst

C. R. Evans, Jr.
C. R. Evans, Jr., MAYOR

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