



COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS

1825 K Street, NW · Suite 411 · Washington, DC 20006 · 202.223.2532 · Fax 202.223.2538 · www.chn.org

September 25, 2020

Dear Senator:

Reports that there is a glimmer of hope for a coronavirus relief package before you leave Washington impel us to write again to implore you to enact the assistance that your constituents and the nation's economy urgently need. The service providers, people of faith, policy experts and civil rights, labor, and other advocacy organizations who make up the [Coalition on Human Needs](#) are seeing unprecedented widespread economic distress due to the pandemic. New [survey results](#) covering the first half of September show 115 million Americans reporting that someone in their household has lost earnings since March 13 (46 percent). For Hispanic and Black households, well over half have lost income from work. This has resulted in millions without enough to eat and falling behind in rent. More than 12 million people in households with children didn't have enough to eat in the previous week; nearly 10 million people in households are not current in their rent. More than one in five Black and Hispanic people are in households suffering these hardships. The most recent weekly [unemployment claims](#) have risen to more than 1.4 million (regular and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance). You can find key data about the hardships constituents in your state are facing in this [very current report](#) from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

The pandemic has imperiled your constituents' economic well-being and their health. COVID-19 cases are again rising, and as we enter the colder months, the threat will increase. The moratorium on evictions expires at the end of the year. If you leave now without acting, millions of people, unable to come up with one or more months of unpaid rent, will face eviction.

You are making a very consequential choice: either actively support and vote for robust COVID relief or abandon your struggling constituents, likely for months. Please prevent this needless harm to people directly threatened and to the economy as a whole.

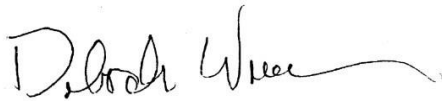
The HEROES Act, enacted by the House in May, included vital components for COVID relief. We believe it is shortsighted to reduce funding for relief below this level. We certainly understand that nothing can pass without negotiations, and call on you to support a package providing urgently needed help, including

- Cash aid, including restoration of the \$600/week Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (the current very temporary program is only replacing [one-quarter](#) of PUC benefits); expansions of the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit; and another round of Economic Impact "stimulus" payments, made available to mixed status families.
- \$100 billion in Emergency rental assistance plus help to prevent utility shutoffs.
- Increases in SNAP maximum and minimum benefits.

- State and local aid, including but not limited to aid to schools, to prevent massive layoffs and service reductions because of revenue shortfalls exceeding \$500 billion, including funding to ensure safe and accurate elections.
- Additional funding for health care, treatment, and prevention, including increased Medicaid and protective equipment for workers.
- Substantial funding for child care and expanded access to paid leave.
- Requiring the decennial Census count to be extended to October 31, 2020, and requiring that statutory reporting deadlines for apportionment and redistricting data and for transmitting state population figures are extended to April 30, 2021. (A federal court decision today requires that, but it will be appealed. Please end the uncertainty by including this in any legislation to be taken up swiftly; if no extension, the consequences in lost resources for the most needy communities will be felt for at least a decade. As [cited in court filings](#), “ ‘Any thinking person who would believe we can deliver apportionment by 12/31,’ ...the executive running daily census operations, wrote in a July 23 email, ‘has either a mental deficiency or a political motivation.’”).

Time is short. With COVID cases rising and economic progress stalling, your constituents, from babies to seniors, are counting on you to act.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Weinstein", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Deborah Weinstein
Executive Director