

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 1, 2020

The Honorable Steven Mnuchin
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin,

We write regarding the \$8 billion in critical relief funds intended for Tribal governments from Title V of the *CARES Act* and to emphasize the urgent need to disburse these funds immediately.

As you know, Title V of the *CARES Act* authorized the establishment of the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) within the Department of the Treasury to provide direct, expedited support for state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments. Tribal governments, like their state, local, and territorial counterparts, are relying on this emergency assistance to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and continue providing essential government services to their communities.

The *CARES Act* was passed over a month ago and contained an express statutory deadline for distribution of the CRF to Tribal governments; however, to date Treasury has not distributed any of this critical funding. While disbursement of the \$8 billion reserved for Tribal governments from the CRF was initially delayed due to litigation, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia's April 27 Order makes clear that there are no legal barriers to releasing CRF funding to Tribal governments.

In short, Treasury should immediately disburse the \$8 billion to eligible federally recognized Tribal governments. Tribal leaders emphasize that any further delay will have severe detrimental impacts on their ability to protect public health and spur economic recovery in their communities.

The pressing need for *CARES Act* resources to combat COVID-19 in Native communities across the country is indisputable. Given our shared responsibilities under the United States' trust and treaty obligations, we respectfully request that the Department immediately disburse the \$8 billion in CRF so that Tribal governments have access to the funds they were promised.

Sincerely,

Senator Tina Smith
Senator Tom Udall

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Senator Jerry Moran
Senator Jon Tester
Senator Maria Cantwell
Senator Catherine Cortez Masto
Senator Brian Schatz
Senator Charles E. Schumer
Senator Kyrsten Sinema
Senator Elizabeth Warren
Senator Martin Heinrich
Senator Debbie Stabenow
Senator Ron Wyden
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Senator Jeffery A. Merkley
Senator Angus S. King, Jr.
Senator Tammy Baldwin
Senator Jack Reed
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Bernard Sanders
Senator Christopher S. Murphy

CC: David Bernhardt
Secretary, Department of the Interior