

Federal Legislative Update Regarding COVID-19 Response Efforts

3/19/2020

Comm. MaryAnn Borgeson, NACo President

-2 Relief packages at the Federal level so far...

-Shift focus to economic recovery, but must ensure they remember public health priorities

Matt Chase, NACo Executive Director

- 450 Emergency declarations cataloged on NACo Covid website

-“Shelter and Place” public health declarations tailored to local communities; encourage county leaders to read declarations and use as resource to tailor to local needs

-County explorer website includes best practices for counties; to submit resource email research@naco.org

- Capitol Hill updates

-3rd supplemental (CARES Act) package possibly to Pres by Sunday night.

-Senate released 235 page bill while on the call- more info to come tonight/tomorrow on the details

-Focus on “saving lives and restoring the economy”

-\$800B - \$1Trillion

-Senate plan- federally guaranteed loans for small biz; convertible grants for payroll/expenses; direct financial aid to certain individuals; Lending to industries of national importance (air/hotels/ect) but will have to be repaid; health section to focus on innovation on vaccines; PPE accessibility; funds to hospital.

-Pressing on test kits and real-time data sharing to local level; PPE national strategy ASAP; Big ask= continue to fund public health fight—cost estimates coming in regularly and must continue to be sent to NACo (ex: San Diego ex: \$7M a month; smaller counties \$350K/month)

-Must have resources now, but also thinking about this fall and fall 2021.

-1st supp. Included \$8.2B- Focus \$950M Local Public Health, which will go federal to state and then to counties. Ensure communication by Local Public Health with the State public health authorities.

-2nd supp- Family First Coronavirus Act signed yesterday.

1) Free Covid testing regardless of insurance; still working to get test out and data communication

2) Nutrition assistance for food banks

3) Unemployment assistance

4) Medicaid contribution increase; FMAP increase by 6.2%

House passed; technical corrections that ended up being substantial. HR 6201- make sure to read **second passed version** (Medicaid Federal contributions clarity, paid medical leave controversy). NACo asking HR directors and consultants to review because patchwork of state laws and regulations related to this. The law says must provide 10 weeks paid leave but limited only to workers caring for a child school/care shut down.

FEMA information-

- Local Govt's eligible to start submitting reimbursements (**category B**, emergency protective measures)

- FEMA cannot duplicate assistance of other federal agencies (HHS/CDC); in direct coordination with those other entities. Working to streamline and expedite funding.

- Working with FEMA regions and States to process funds quickly; as of this AM 223 request were in, 55 from counties and 81 cities/townships.

- States can assist counties to work in the FEMA grant system, if a county has not entered the portal before.

- Working to provide grants training through the States; new delivery model- not assigning regional FEMA managers, rather working through states. Also looking to implement direct processing for counties/cities but no timeline provided.

- Fact sheet released today outlining eligibility. States are submitting questions and FEMA responding as soon as possible and putting info on FEMA.gov.

- Further Fact sheets will be sent to NACo to distribute more details.

- Call is recorded and will be posted on NACo site.