



WISCONSIN TOWNS  
ASSOCIATION

Empowering Town Officials

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Dear President Trump,

The WTA represents 1246 towns covering 95% of Wisconsin and including almost 30% of the population. Towns provide for over 54% of the state's roads, provide fire/EMS services (mostly volunteer), run elections, and are home to thousands of businesses ranging from agriculture to tourism to mining. Our budgets are tight and town officials extraordinarily frugal. If there's a way to duct tape something together in order to achieve efficiencies, our town officials figure it out.

The COVID-19 crisis has significantly and negatively impacted our budgets and put a severe strain on services. Towns have needed to spend more to run fair elections, provide critical emergency services, and partner with businesses to bridge the gap between where we are now and where the economy will be after we work through this. These increased demands have to be met in order to protect our democracy, provide public safety, and preserve the foundations for economic growth. The double whammy is that they have come at the same time as revenue decreases. **Increased service demands coupled with decreasing revenue will cause disastrous outcomes at the local level.**

I am writing today to implore you to work with Majority Leader McConnell and Speaker Pelosi to develop a fourth COVID relief package that addresses the needs of our smaller, rural communities. This package should provide for simple, fast, and direct payment to town government to prevent severe cuts to core services, the same services that are necessary to protect citizens and create a foundation for the private sector to succeed.

We strongly recommend that this package include infrastructure investment. Our single largest budget item is road infrastructure. Many towns are stealing from their transportation budget in an attempt to cover the costs of COVID-19. That means an already sub-par infrastructure will be falling into further disrepair without the necessary federal assistance. Further, we expect the State of Wisconsin to cut transportation aids to local government, making it worse.

This crisis has revealed the necessity of a strong supply chain and that means sound road infrastructure. Failure to include transportation funding in the package will result in further degradation of this country's ability to safely and promptly deliver necessary supplies. On the positive side, investment in infrastructure is a sound way to jump start the economy. Road workers spend money in hotels and at restaurants. Injecting an investment in infrastructure might be the only way some of these small communities and businesses survive. With the right choices, we can kill several birds with one stone – jump start the economy, create employment, repair infrastructure, and improve the supply chain.

Thank you in advance for your strong consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Mike Koles  
Executive Director  
Wisconsin Towns Association  
Enclosure