



TIPS TO ADVOCATE FOR YOUR COMMUNITY'S COVID-19 RECOVERY NEEDS WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

The Senate has begun discussions on the American Rescue Plan. The House version of this \$1.9 trillion relief bill includes \$350 billion in direct aid to state and local governments. \$130 billion of the aid would be split evenly between cities and counties, according to a formula.

ICMA, the National League of Cities, National Association of Counties, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and Government Finance Officers Association support the direct funding to local governments and the distribution formula. While senators hear a great deal about state government finances, they know much less about local government fiscal realities. Here are some tips on how to communicate with them.

1. **Provide short data points to convey your local government's fiscal reality. Have your costs increased since the pandemic? What is your revenue picture (now and in the future)?**

QUICK FACTS: COVID-19 Impacts on Local Governments

- 84% of local governments projected a decrease in revenue for their first budget adopted since the pandemic: 45% projected up to a 10 percent decline in overall revenue; nearly a third projected revenue losses between 11-20%; and 10% projected losses of more than 20%.
- About half of local governments have delayed improvements in public recreation spaces or in government facilities (other than public safety). 40% have delayed improvements to road or sidewalk infrastructure.

- Hiring freezes were put in place by 52% of all local governments. Furloughs were reported by 19% of local governments; 12% reported layoffs.

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ICMA Survey Research: COVID-19 Impacts on Local Governments

2. **If your city or county received CARES Act funding, how did you use it? And if you did not receive any funds, what are some of the unmet needs in your community?**



QUICK FACTS: How Cities and Counties Used CARES Act Funding

- 76% for public health expenses, i.e., PPE and supplies, disinfection of facilities, technical assistance.



- 72% for compliance with COVID-19 public health measures, i.e., telework support for employees, paid sick/family medical leave for public employees, distance learning technologies or process improvements.
 - 71% for payroll expenses for key personnel, i.e., public works, public health, public safety.
 - 46% for economic support, i.e., support to local business, other payroll support.
 - 35% for support to vulnerable populations, i.e., food delivery, care for homeless populations, sanitation/safety measures for incarceration facilities, other social and community measures.
 - 24% for medical expenses, i.e., testing, treatment, existing or temporary facilities.
3. **Tell a story. How has CARES Act funding made a difference?**

EXAMPLE:

In Dubuque, Iowa, a single mother of four who was working at a nursing home when the pandemic began, contracted COVID-19 and was sent home. During her recovery, schools and daycares were closed. She was unable to return to work because she had to care for her children. She received a total of \$2,710 in short-term financial assistance from Dubuque's CARES Act program, allowing her to avoid eviction and utility disconnection. Dubuque made the payments directly to her landlord and to the utility company.

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[More examples of innovative local government strategies](#)

WHAT'S NEXT?

ICMA will continue working with its partners, the Big 7, GFOA, and others to provide members with updates on how local governments can access resources to help their communities respond to, and recover from, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. ICMA and its partners will also bring the local government perspective into any new legislation or the development of regulations related to the recovery efforts.

For more information on ICMA resources related to COVID-19, visit icma.org/coronavirus.

