

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 18, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pence  
Vice President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Vice President Pence,

The effect of COVID-19 on our constituent municipalities is vast and has drastically altered nearly all aspects of daily operation. In order for state and local health agencies to shoulder the burden of this unprecedented pandemic, it is imperative that they are granted the flexibility that is necessary for them to allocate scarce staff resources without jeopardizing their federal grant funding.

Many federal grants that support state and local health agency initiatives require that the recipient agency meticulously track the hours and personnel that work on such projects in order to continue to maintain eligibility. This record keeping is an integral part of the requirements that a health agency must meet in order to apply for and receive most, if not all, funding of this type.

As coronavirus continues to spread, state and local health agencies in our state are finding themselves in the position of having to divert personnel away from working on certain public health grant projects in order to address coronavirus' growing impact on their local communities.

City officials in Nevada have expressed concern over the effect this diversion may have on their ability to utilize health grant funding which they have already received.

At the end of a grant-funded initiative, state or local health agencies must present logged hours to the grant-making entity as evidence of proper utilization of such funding. With coronavirus response measures demanding the attention of more and more state health agency personnel, it is becoming increasingly likely that state agencies that have received federal grant funding for initiatives not related to coronavirus may be unable to meet the work requirements stipulated in the grant award.

If that were to occur, designated grant funds could be rescinded and municipalities would show a loss in their fiscal budget. This would strain state health agency funding at a time of extraordinary need in communities all over the country.

Our state and local health agencies should not be forced to forfeit much-needed federal dollars for public health initiatives that were vital to our communities before the coronavirus outbreak, and will be needed long after the outbreak is contained by our tireless health care workers and first responders.

As you work to support states and local health agencies in the midst of this pandemic, we ask that you direct relevant federal agency heads to provide grant recipients with reasonable leniency in utilizing previously-awarded federal health care grant funding to respond to COVID-19 in their communities.

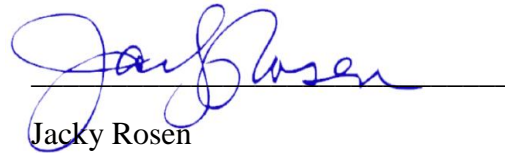
Thank you for your consideration and your attention to the needs of state and local health agencies as they strive to keep our communities safe.

Sincerely,



Catherine Cortez Masto

United States Senator



Jacky Rosen

United States Senator