



CITY OF CARSON

September 30, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Support for House Passed HEROES Act

Dear Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, and Leader McCarthy:

As the Mayor of the City of Carson, I want to thank you for the action undertaken to address the immediate needs of our nation during the COVID-19 pandemic. While emergency funding provided to state and local governments through the CARES Act was urgently needed, it is by no means sufficient. Despite the uncertainty and rapidly changing nature of this crisis, local jurisdictions are on the front lines and are increasing efforts to ensure the health and safety of residents. **To meet this challenge, it is imperative that Congress pass the new version of the HEROES Act, which increases state and local fiscal support.**

Like all municipalities across the nation the City of Carson is on the front lines of the pandemic, having experienced major financial revenue losses from continued economic instability while our expenses have increased in order to properly address the public safety and health of our shared constituency.

Our City enacted very aggressive policies to help our community during this pandemic. As far back as April 27, 2020, in partnership with US Health Fairs, the City of Carson began providing free COVID-19 testing to residents and non-residents alike, without restricting testing to those with symptoms or a known exposure. We were lauded as the first such city in Southern California to do so and the second nationally. With more than half of Carson's population being more vulnerable based upon ethnicity demographics, a test site in Carson was a critical step in our collective effort against the spread of the coronavirus. As you know, increasing testing for all is key to identifying people who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic who are unknowingly spreading the virus.

Moreover, a massive amount of Personal Protection Equipment for employees and residents, supplies and cleaning efforts have been purchased to aid the effort to reduce the spread of the pandemic. The City of Carson was one of the first cities in the State to mandate the wearing of masks and face coverings, and to purchase masks for our staff and residents. Like most other entities with public facing functions, we have also installed plexiglass at public counters and hand sanitizer throughout our facilities. In addition, to ensure that we are eliminating the virus from any surfaces in our facilities, we have retained a professional cleaning company to perform deep cleaning of all 21 of the City's facilities beyond what our custodial staff is able to provide.

To address the airborne characteristics of the virus, we are making changes to our building operations, including the operation of heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems, to reduce airborne exposures. The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) states, "Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 through the air is sufficiently likely that airborne exposure to the virus should be controlled." In the fight against the pandemic, the City of Carson is in the process of upgrading our air filtration systems. To achieve this, our City Hall and Community Center will require the replacement of the entire Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning systems consistent with CDC specifications. This effort alone is likely to cost about \$5 million.

The City has also been assisting the small business community in Carson through a variety of initiatives using our already depleted General Funds. The City retained the California Community Economic Development Association (CCEDA) to assist Carson businesses in applying for SBA and State loans and grants. Moreover, the City of Carson launched its own Small Business Coronavirus Business Assistance Program to provide support for small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 virus and associated restrictions. The City has appropriated \$500,000 of its own General Funds to assist in the funding of this business loan program and expects these funds to be depleted shortly. This program continues to have a regional benefit.

Since the City of Carson, and all cities, have taken such significant and costly steps to mitigate the spread of this virus, we will need the next round of economic relief to provide direct funding allocations to cities and states to counteract budget shortfalls.

Above all, the COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted local communities. Additional federal funding will be essential so that local governments can continue to provide the necessary support to address the increase in unemployment, minimize the economic impact of business closures, ensure all students have access to education, meet the child care and housing needs of residents, and maintain public transportation agencies and social welfare programs.

Again, thank you for your efforts and I look forward to working with you to overcome this crisis.

Sincerely,

Albert Robles
Mayor, City of Carson

Jim Dear, Mayor Pro Tem

Lula Davis-Holmes, Councilmember

Jawane Hilton, Councilmember

Cedric L. Hicks, Sr., Councilmember

CC: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Kamala Harris
Congresswoman Nanette Barragán