[Date]

The Honorable [First Name] [Last Name]

United States [Senate/House of Representatives]

[Address Line 1]

[Address Line 2]

Dear [Senator/Congressman] [Last Name],

On behalf of the [Number] residents of [Name] County we urge the United States House of Representatives to pass the bipartisan *State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Fiscal Recovery, Infrastructure and Disaster Relief Act* (S. 3011/H.R. 5735). This bill would provide additional flexibilities to the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (Recovery Fund) established by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and was approved in the U.S. Senate by unanimous consent on October 19, 2021.

The $350 billion Recovery Fund provided $65.1 billion in direct aid to every county, parish and borough in America. America’s nearly 40,000 county elected officials and 3.6 million county employees have been on the frontlines of the nation’s response to the coronavirus pandemic. In [Name] County, Recovery Funds have been used to [describe expenditures for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic using ARPA recovery funds such as public health, workforce development and job training, water, sewer, broadband].

As directed by the text of ARPA and the U.S. Department of Treasury (Treasury), counties invest in a broad range of programs, services and projects. H.R. 5735 would build on these flexibilities to allow counties to invest a portion of Recovery Funds in transportation, infrastructure, economic development and disaster relief. This additional flexibility would allow [Name] County to [describe transportation, infrastructure, economic development or disaster relief needs in a few of words].

Beyond the additional flexibilities for uses of funds, the bill would unlock unobligated funds allocated to Treasury for administrative expenses related to operating the Recovery Fund and allow Treasury to continue to work with our county to implement these funds. Since the enactment of ARPA, [Name] County has been working tirelessly with Treasury to ensure Recovery Funds have the flexibility to properly address our unique needs and that we are fulfilling our role as sound financial stewards. Treasury has been a critical partner and valuable resource throughout the implementation of the Recovery Fund. Therefore, unlocking these additional resources will ensure Treasury can most effectively continue to oversee the implementation and auditing of the Recovery Fund while also supporting state, local and tribal partners.

Additionally, H.R. 5735 would more clearly define which counties are deemed as “revenue sharing” and therefore eligible to receive payments from the $1.5 billion Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund established under Sec. 605 of ARPA. Since ARPA was passed through the budget reconciliation process, the congressional intent is not reflected in the statute, but it is clear these funds are intended for public lands counties who are eligible for payments under the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. H.R. 5735 would codify the intent that PILT-eligible counties are entitled to Sec. 605 payments.

*If your county is PILT-/Sec. 605-eligible:* These payments are especially important for counties that have federal land acreage within their boundaries, like [Name] County, that are unable to tax the property values or products derived from these federal lands. Ensuring that these funds are distributed to federal lands counties will ensure we can continue to support essential local government services – those mandated by law – such as education, emergency services, transportation infrastructure, law enforcement and health care.

The ARPA Recovery Fund has been critical to [Name] County as we continue to recover from the COVID-19 public health emergency. With the additional flexibility and clarifications provided by H.R. 5735, the true intent of the ARPA – to assist state, local and tribal governments in their recovery from the disastrous impacts of the global pandemic – can be realized.

Thank you for your continued service to [Name] County. We thank you for your partnership and respectfully ask that you swiftly pass H.R. 5735.

Sincerely,

[Name of Local Elected Official]

[County, State]