April 29, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

Following up on the State, County and Locality Stabilization Fund passed as part of the CARES Act in late March 2020, we believe there is an opportunity to further stabilize local government funding in rural counties throughout America. We respectfully request a long-term solution for the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS) and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) programs in the next COVID-19 legislative package, and that such funding not be deducted from direct aid to state and local governments that may be included in the next legislative package.

The stop and start authorizations and payments under SRS and PILT have wreaked havoc on rural America for decades, and now, with the COVID-19 pandemic, the budgets of these rural counties are decimated. These two programs fund roads, schools, law enforcement, and other essential county services such as public health programs. With inadequate funding and now additional demands on their resources, rural communities and counties are at the breaking point.

Despite being small, rural, and generally relatively remote, county governments that rely on SRS and PILT are responding to the same national health crisis facing larger cities and urban areas. Extending these two programs has wide, bipartisan support as proven by the multiple extensions over the years. Now more than ever, these counties need the certainty that long term authorizations can provide to ensure viability for these programs for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress
Bruce Westerman  
Member of Congress

Don Young  
Member of Congress

Scott Tipton  
Member of Congress

Mike Simpson  
Member of Congress

Glenn “G.T.” Thompson  
Member of Congress

Kurt Schrader  
Member of Congress

Jefferson Van Drew  
Member of Congress

Tom O’Halleran  
Member of Congress

Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress

Liz Cheney  
Member of Congress

Paul Cook  
Member of Congress

Jim Costa  
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

Deb Haaland  
Member of Congress
Jaime Herrera Beutler  
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress

Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress

Ann Kirkpatrick  
Member of Congress

David Schweikert  
Member of Congress

Greg Gianforte  
Member of Congress

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

Dusty Johnson  
Member of Congress

Ben McAdams  
Member of Congress

Paul Gosar  
Member of Congress

Russ Fulcher  
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress

Greg Walden  
Member of Congress

Chris Stewart  
Member of Congress
Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress

Al Lawson  
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress

John Garamendi  
Member of Congress

Louie Gohmert  
Member of Congress

Ben Ray Lujan  
Member of Congress

Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress

Susie Lee  
Member of Congress

Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress

Dan Newhouse  
Member of Congress

Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress

Dina Titus  
Member of Congress
Kevin Brady
Member of Congress

Donna E. Shalala
Member of Congress

Collin C. Peterson
Member of Congress

Xochitl Torres Small
Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress