



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

April 29, 2020

The Honorable Steven Mnuchin  
Secretary of the Treasury  
Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20220

The Honorable David Bernhardt  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

**Re: Immediate Disbursement of Coronavirus Relief Fund to Tribal Governments**

Dear Secretary Mnuchin and Secretary Bernhardt:

We write to you today in response to the numerous concerns that we have heard from leaders of the 574 federally-recognized tribal governments regarding the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) established under Title V of the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* following the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia's Order that was issued on April 27, 2020 enjoining the Treasury Department from disbursing CRF funding to Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs).

Congress designated \$8 billion from the CRF established in the CARES Act to ensure sovereign tribal governments have the resources needed during the COVID-19 pandemic to cover expenditures associated with the public health emergency. As you are aware, the detrimental impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have had a disproportionate health care and economic impact on federally recognized tribes due a chronic lack of essential resources.

The Congressional intent behind the CRF is to expedite relief funds to governments, including sovereign tribal governments, as part of the federal government's larger initiative to provide emergency assistance throughout the country. As you are aware, the CARES Act was passed over a month ago, on March 27, 2020, yet this funding has yet to be disbursed to tribal governments, in part due to litigation aimed at ensuring these resources go to the governmental entities that Congress intended. While the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia issued its decision yesterday to place a temporary injunction from releasing funds to ANCs until a final decision is rendered, the Court's decision does not prevent the Treasury Department from releasing resources to federally-recognized Tribal and Alaska Native governments.

**Thus, we respectfully request the Treasury Department immediately begin to disburse the \$8 billion of Coronavirus Relief Funds to eligible federally recognized tribal governments in compliance with the intended purpose of the COVID-19 relief funds and in recognition of the negative impact that every day of delay has on Tribes.** Further postponement in disbursing these funds is unnecessary and

works against the federal government's trust responsibility to the 574 federally recognized tribal nations in the United States.

Sincerely,



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Deb Haaland  
Member of Congress



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Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress



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Tom O'Halleran  
Member of Congress



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Ben Ray Lujan  
Member of Congress

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Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress

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Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/ signed electronically\_\_\_\_\_/u>  
Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

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Raul M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress