



April 3, 2020

The Honorable Pete Gaynor  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

**Robin Vos**  
Assembly Speaker  
Wisconsin  
President, NCSL

**Martha R. Wigton**  
Director  
House Budget & Research  
Office  
Georgia  
Staff Chair, NCSL

**Tim Storey**  
Executive Director

Dear Administrator Gaynor:

The National Conference of State Legislatures writes to urge the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to waive all cost share requirements for assistance under President Trump's COVID-19 National Emergency Declaration and any subsequent COVID-19 Major Disaster Declarations. State legislatures across the nation are confronting the grim reality of severe budget shortfalls in the face of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. Now more than ever, state legislatures must weigh increasing and competing priorities regarding unprecedented demand on unemployment benefits, health supply and staffing shortages, disrupted education systems and severely depleted state resources. With expected double-digit unemployment figures and the risk of recession high, states simply will not have the funds to spare for the 25 percent cost share currently required for FEMA assistance.

Federal statute provides FEMA the authority to increase the federal cost share to 100 percent for emergency work, including Direct Federal Assistance, if warranted by the needs of a disaster. With state resources so manifestly overwhelmed, few emergencies present a clearer case for 100 percent federal coverage as the COVID-19 pandemic. Major Disaster Declarations have already been approved for at least 38 states and territories, with more submissions every day. Many of them already request, but have not been granted, 100 percent federal cost share. With FEMA leading the federal response effort for COVID-19, you know as well as any the strain our communities are under and the urgency with which states need your support in their emergency response efforts.

We wish you and the staff at FEMA good health as you continue to lead the national response effort and thank you for your continued leadership and partnership through this unprecedented crisis. We stand with you in combatting this global pandemic affecting all Americans. If you have further questions, please contact Lucia Bragg [lucia.bragg@ncsl.org](mailto:lucia.bragg@ncsl.org) | 202-624-3576 and Susan Frederick [susan.frederick@ncsl.org](mailto:susan.frederick@ncsl.org) | 202-624-3566.

Sincerely,

Representative Eric Hutchings, Utah  
Co-Chair, NCSL Law, Criminal Justice &  
Public Safety Committee

Representative Roger Goodman, Washington  
Co-Chair, NCSL Law, Criminal Justice &  
Public Safety Committee