

May 8, 2020

Senator Tom Tillis
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Tillis:

We, the undersigned mayors of Brunswick County municipalities, are writing to request your assistance in obtaining assistance for the revenue shortfalls we all are experiencing due to the coronavirus pandemic.

First, we wish to thank you for your support of the CARES Act and its funding of state and local COVID-19 expenses. We know that these are difficult times for all levels of government and those who work to provide services to our citizens.

The CARES Act, though, will not help address the State and local revenue shortfalls created by the COVID-19 crisis. We need your support for federal legislation to address this need so that our communities can move forward and so that an economic downturn is not prolonged.

It is important to understand that the greatest challenges moving forward for city governments are lost revenues due to the economics effects created by this crisis. These include declines in sales taxes and occupancy taxes, as well as water and sewer utility revenue due to industry slowdowns and because residents cannot pay their bills.

Roughly 30 percent of municipal general fund budgets in North Carolina go toward public safety. Without federal help backfilling these revenue holes, cuts to these services and personnel are inevitable. Local governments play a crucial role in the overall economy, and layoffs and canceled infrastructure contracts and other reduced government expenditures will extend an economic downturn, in ways similar to private sector businesses that cut their staffs or curtail spending.

Cities and towns did not cause the situation that they now find themselves in; a global pandemic did. Their needs are neither Republican nor Democratic. Their needs are the needs of the citizens of our state, in small towns and in larger cities. On behalf of our citizens and businesses, we ask that you help North Carolina move beyond this crisis to a better day and support legislation that will address local revenue shortfalls and ensure a strong economic future.

We appreciate your consideration, and we would be glad to provide any additional information that you may require in considering this important request.

Sincerely,

Andy Sayre, Mayor – Village of Bald Head Island
Mike Allen, Mayor – Town of Belville
Craig Caster, Mayor – City of Boiling Spring Lakes
Ella Jane Marston, Mayor – Town of Bolivia
Donna Long, Mayor – Town of Calabash
Joyce Dunn, Mayor – Town of Carolina Shores
Deborah Ahlers, Mayor – Town of Caswell Beach
J. Alan Holden, Mayor – Town of Holden Beach
Brenda Bozeman, Mayor – Town of Leland
Eulis Willis, Mayor – Town of Navassa,
James Knox, Mayor – City of Northwest
Ken Thomas, Mayor Town of Oak Island
Glenn Marshall, Mayor – Town of Sandy Creek
Walt Eccard, Mayor – Town of Shallotte
Joe Pat Hatem, Mayor – City of Southport
Jean Toner, Mayor – Town of St. James
David Shannon Phillips, Mayor – Town of Sunset Beach

*Identical copies of this communication have been sent to Senator Richard Burr and Representative David Rouzer.