



News from Livingston County, NY

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Livingston County Calls for Washington to Compromise on Stimulus Bill

*Without Federal Aid, Counties Face Financial Cliff in Lost Sales Tax
Revenue and Reductions in State Reimbursements*

Geneseo, NY, August 4, 2020 — Following the recent introduction of the HEALS Act in the U.S. Senate, Livingston County is calling on Congressional leaders and President Trump to reach a compromise coronavirus relief bill that provides direct, unrestricted aid to states and counties. This much-needed aid will help prevent devastating cuts and support Livingston County as it funds and administers a wide array of vital services, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), and substance abuse prevention services.

“With sales tax returns plummeting and New York State cutting state aid by 20%, county governments are teetering on the edge of a fiscal cliff as demands for services rise and economic activity is at a standstill. With COVID-19 cases rising around the nation and the New York state economy struggling to get back on track, now is not the time to be cutting services, jobs or limiting the capacity of our frontline workers to keep the virus in check. It’s time for our leaders in Washington to come together and compromise on a plan that provides direct federal aid to support our communities during this crisis and keep us moving forward,” stated Ian M. Coyle, Livingston County Administrator.

An [updated economic impact report](#) recently released by the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) shows counties and New York City facing a catastrophic \$13.5 billion loss in revenue over two fiscal years that could lead to significant cuts to services and permanent layoffs, slowing the economic recovery and threatening gains made against the virus. Without direct federal aid to backfill this loss of revenue, counties will not be able to fully fund the

testing, tracing, and emergency response activities needed to get the pandemic under control and get our communities back on their feet.

The report also notes that State and local governments are major employers and provide nearly 12 percent of all U.S. jobs. Economists have noted that in the last downturn, during the Great Recession, the federal government's austerity approach and decision to prematurely end financial assistance to states and local governments contributed significantly to the slow recovery, both in employment terms and contributions to gross domestic product.

"County governments are facing a perfect fiscal storm, as severe revenue loss and a forecasted high demand for social service programs threaten to grind county government to a halt and stall our progress in combatting COVID-19," said Coyle. "Without help from our federal partners in the form of direct aid to local governments, counties will be hard-pressed to provide the essential services that are crucial to stopping the virus and reopening our communities."

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