



# Sarah Godlewski

Office of the State Treasurer | State of Wisconsin

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June 23, 2020

***Sent via electronic mail***

Congressman Bryan Steil  
1408 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Gwen Moore  
2252 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Ron Kind  
1502 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Glenn Grothman  
1427 Longworth H.O.B.  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner  
2449 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC, 20515

Congressman Mike Gallagher  
1230 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Tom Tiffany  
1714 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Tammy Baldwin  
709 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Mark Pocan  
1421 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Ron Johnson  
709 Hart Senate Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE:** Request for Federal Aid for Wisconsin and Local Government to Compensate for Lost Revenues

Dear Wisconsin Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of local treasurers across Wisconsin, we thank you for your efforts to respond to the COVID-19 emergency that has gravely impacted our state. Additionally, we appreciate your acknowledgment of the role state and local governments play in combating this pandemic – both in terms of public health and economic stability.

As treasurers, it is our duty to ensure the economic stability of our communities and the financial well-being of Wisconsinites. This economic crisis is unprecedented owing to COVID-19 related expenditures at a time when state and local revenues have drastically declined. In a recent survey conducted by the State Treasurer's office, just over seventy percent of counties expressed concern or were unsure of their ability to cover coronavirus-related expenses.

**As our representatives in Washington, we urge you to provide flexible and dedicated federal funding that will benefit all Wisconsin communities in the next stimulus package.**

Our state and local governments fund services that are essential to our citizens and small businesses -- most notably, the firefighters, EMTs, teachers, and other public servants who are the lifelines of our communities. Yet, the unanticipated and unbudgeted expenses from COVID-19 coupled with the precipitous loss in revenue place many Wisconsin communities in a dire financial position.

Furthermore, unlike the federal government, local governments are required to balance their budgets regardless of circumstance. Counties across the state have estimated their financial shortfalls to be in the hundreds of millions. Tapping into rainy-day funds and budget cuts will be required but will not be sufficient. As a county treasurer from Northeast Wisconsin stated, some are looking at permanent layoffs and potential furloughs. If local governments cannot address these financial challenges, it will come at the cost of essential services and workers at a time when we need them most.

Wisconsinites are counting on you to aid our communities through this economic recovery. Specifically, we call on you as our Congressional representatives to address such measures by supporting the following:

- **Provide additional aid to stabilize Wisconsin and our local governments.** Without dedicated and flexible aid to supplement both the short- and long-term revenue losses, Wisconsin and local governments will be limited in their response to this unfolding crisis. Further, recovery will be restricted and slow as communities will have no alternative other than to make significant cuts to services - including the layoffs of our essential workers.
- **Provide stimulus funding for all Wisconsin Communities:** Any additional aid needs to be dedicated to all Wisconsin communities including those that have fewer than 500,000 residents. While the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) was a step in the right direction, it left many of our local governments behind.
- **Allow already appropriated funds to be used to cover lost revenues.** Funds provided by the CARES Act are restricted to increased and unbudgeted COVID-19 related expenses. As local leaders, we know what is best to keep our communities safe and healthy, and providing flexibility will allow us to optimize our limited resources and ensure we are able to provide what is needed for citizens.

State and local governments cannot afford to carry this financial burden any longer and require additional aid to balance our budgets. As Chair of the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands, our team has been working hard to provide financial assistance through the State Trust Fund Loan program. In addition, Governor Evers provided \$200 million to aid local governments with COVID-19 related expenses. While these steps are in the right direction, our capacity is limited and the communities across our state need further assistance.

The anticipation of layoffs and furloughs is quickly becoming a harsh reality. It is imperative we support our local governments that are combating this virus and working towards a successful economic recovery. Thank you for your consideration and efforts on behalf of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

*Sarah Godlewski*

Sarah Godlewski  
State Treasurer of Wisconsin

*Valerie Etzel*

Valerie Etzel  
President  
Wisconsin County Treasurers Association