

YOUR NAME
YOUR ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP

DATE

NAME OF MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
XXX House Office Building
Washington, DC 200XX

Dear Representative NAME:

As a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and a constituent of your district, I write to you today urge your support to extend the use of Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) dollars for tribal governments and request that any new relief legislation include fiscal set asides for tribal governments.

The delays for tribes receiving the initial CRF payments allocated under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act have caused many tribal governments to need an extension in order to spend the money. As it stands now, funds received from the CARES Act must be spent by tribes by December 30, 2020. Tribal governments did not begin to receive their CRF allocations until May 5—well after the March 27 enactment of the CARES Act. This delay in the disbursement of funds greatly hindered tribes' ability to spend CRF dollars.

Today, tribal governments are expeditiously working to utilize the CARES Act monies and fulfill immediate emergency needs, as well as ensure long-term benefits for tribal citizens. That is what CRF dollars were always intended to address. Cherokee Nation's COVID-19 Respond, Recover, and Rebuild plan is a responsible blueprint for spending down our CRF allocation. However, with more time these dollars could go farther and do more to help our government and our people recover from the impact of COVID-19. In light of this, I respectfully ask that the CRF deadline be extended to 2021 or 2022.

Additionally, any future legislation should include tribal priorities. Tribes, such as the Cherokee Nation, need ongoing federal support so that they can continue working to help their tribal citizens in need throughout the pandemic, and find more ways to combat this deadly virus.

Indian Country is devastated by COVID-19, and we finally have a real opportunity to address issues – infrastructure investment, health care access, and broadband connectivity – that have plagued our communities for years. These issues have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I respectfully request that you, as my member of Congress, pass these measures and provide tribal nations more time to properly execute responsible spending of CRF funds. Thank you for your ongoing support for Indian Country.

Sincerely,

NAME

cc: Cherokee Nation