**Note: Remove and replace highlighted text before sending.**

(CITY LETTERHEAD)

The Honorable (NAME)
(ADDRESS)
(ADDRESS)

Dear Representative (NAME):

As a city leader and a constituent, I am writing on behalf of (CITY) to urge you to support funding for all local governments in the next round of federal assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, we are asking for your support of legislation that provides emergency fiscal assistance to cities of all sizes, fair and direct allocations to all local governments, and maximum flexibility to use this funding to address the consequences of coronavirus on our cities.

The virus is taking a toll on first responders, utility workers, and sanitation workers who are out in the community every day putting their own lives at risk to protect the public’s health and safety. Without federal support, the cities working so hard to provide these critical services, particularly small cities, will struggle to survive. So far, cities with fewer than 500,000 residents have been left behind in federal legislation to address the coronavirus. Immediate action is needed to support these communities.

(Include a few sentences describing the impact of the virus on your city’s revenues and expenditures and provide examples of expenditures related to the virus, staffing concerns, or impacts to local service provision. Your local examples are especially important to “put a face” on this issue and the needs of cities regardless of population size. Sample talking points:

In (CITY), our expenses are up by \_\_\_\_\_\_% due to increases in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  Our revenues are also down significantly, overall by \_\_\_\_\_% and we have seen dramatic decreases in sales taxes by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_%, hotel/motel taxes by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%, alcohol taxes by \_\_\_\_\_\_% and occupation taxes by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_%.

In addition, many of our residents who have lost their jobs are unable to pay even their water/sewer bills and sanitation bills.  Our revenues are down by \_\_\_\_\_ % in these areas, yet the expenses to operate water and wastewater systems and provide citywide services do not go down proportionally.  This results in choices we will soon have to make to eliminate jobs, including public safety, close facilities, cut back services, all things that will harm the very citizens we are elected to serve.)

It is imperative that all Georgia cities receive federal funding to help us meet the needs in our communities. The services cities provide directly impact the quality of life to raise a family, create jobs, and provide hope for young people that they can have a bright future in their home town. Congress cannot turn a blind eye to the crisis our cities are facing, similar to the dire circumstances faced by businesses, states, and local governments over 500,000 that have received billions from the federal government. Our small cities are the backbone of this state and we are a primary reason Georgia has been named the #1 place to do business for 6 consecutive years.  However, faced with major cuts in the services that attract business and industry, we cannot be successful in recruiting those businesses and their investments that make our cities what they are, the heart and soul of this state.

This crisis we face is not about local governments, it is about local residents, the very ones that all of us as elected officials, local, state and federal, take an oath to serve. This is the crisis of a generation and how we respond to it, with action and funding instead of partisan politics, will define our future in this state and in every city.

We request a favorable response to this letter and will be following this legislation closely to determine where our members of Congress stand in this time of crisis.

Sincerely,

(NAME)
(TITLE)