



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

April 14, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Mr. Paul F. Ford
Acting Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region 1
99 High Street, 6th floor
Boston, MA 02110

Through: Mr. W. Russ Webster
Federal Coordinating Officer, COVID-19

RE: EM 3439; DR 4500 COVID-19 Pandemic Request for Cost-Share Adjustment

Dear President Trump:

In accordance with the cost-share adjustment provisions outlined in 44 CFR Section 206.47(d), I am writing to request a cost-share adjustment to 100% in connection with EM 3439 and DR 4500, both issued to the State of Connecticut with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic.

First, I want to thank you for your expeditious decision to issue a Presidential Major Disaster declaration, providing FEMA Public Assistance disaster program support to Connecticut in response to this historic crisis. I am confirming with you by this letter that the declaration awarded includes our tribal nations of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and the Mohegan Tribal Nation, which were included in our request. Also, we look forward to a response on our Individual Assistance Program requests once FEMA has determined the application of the recent Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("Families First Act") and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") to our requests for certain Individual Assistance programs. Also, if you should direct FEMA to open the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, please accept this letter as a request for Connecticut to be eligible for that program.

Turning to the request for a cost-share adjustment, the size and scope of this public health disaster is unprecedented. With the award of a Presidential Major Disaster declaration to Wyoming, for the first time in history, every state in the Union has received a Major Disaster declaration associated with one event. Mr. President, you rightly acknowledged the extent of the pandemic when you declared a national emergency under Section 501(b) of the Stafford Act. That section reads in part: “The President may exercise any authority vested in him by Section 502 or Section 503 with respect to an emergency when he determines that an emergency exists for which the primary responsibility for response rests with the United States because the emergency involves a subject area for which, under the Constitution of the laws of the United States, the United States exercises exclusive or preeminent responsibility and authority.” See Letter from President Donald J. Trump on Emergency Determination Under the Stafford Act, issued March 13, 2020. This cost-share request is in keeping with your vision of the extent of this disaster and the primacy of Federal responsibility.

The current cost share between Connecticut and FEMA is 25-75, with the State, its tribal nations, municipalities, and eligible private non-profit entities expected to absorb 25% of the costs of eligible Category B Emergency Protective Measures incurred as life-saving response actions. Under 44 CFR 206.47(d), “If warranted by the needs of the disaster, we recommend up to one hundred percent (100%) Federal funding for emergency work under section 403 and section 407, including direct Federal assistance, for a limited period in the initial days of the disaster irrespective of the per capita impact.” This global pandemic, with catastrophic and cascading effects on all aspects of American life, is just such a circumstance. A cost-share adjustment providing for 100% federal reimbursement of Category B costs, as well as direct federal assistance, is warranted. Connecticut requests 100% reimbursement for these costs from January 20, 2020 to the end of the incident period, which has not yet been determined.

The human and fiscal costs to Connecticut are staggering. As of April 13, 2020, Connecticut has more than 13,380 COVID-19 positive cases. Nearly 700 people have died. Nearly 1,800 are hospitalized. Almost 10% of our total population – about 333,000 people – has filed unemployment claims since March 13. State government has already incurred about \$500 million in unbudgeted costs in responding to the pandemic, and current projections indicate that number will at least triple to \$1.5 billion. Working in a whole-of-community environment, Federal, state, tribal, and local agencies have been coordinating with the healthcare community, private non-profit providers and other private sector partners, as well as the public, to combat this disease. I have issued 27 Executive Orders to assist healthcare providers, businesses and residents in meeting the daily demands of COVID-19 response. We have ordered millions of dollars worth of Personal Protective Equipment and other supplies and are working to protect our healthcare and other direct care providers, first responders, and others on the frontline. With FEMA’s approval, we have established non-congregate shelters for first responders, healthcare workers, domestic violence victims and homeless people, among others. Medical surge locations providing almost 2000 additional beds are set up for use. Nursing home surge locations are also established. On the economic side, among other actions, Connecticut has established a small business bridge loan program and waived administrative restrictions to make accessing economic assistance simpler and faster. These are just a few of the actions taken to stem the tide of new cases, and address the needs of the sick and vulnerable.

On behalf of the people of Connecticut, I am very appreciative of the economic support actions taken in Washington, in the form of the CARES Act and the Families First Act. These Acts will bolster the economic recovery of individuals and businesses. Providing 100% Federal

reimbursement for Category B costs and direct Federal assistance will provide similar economic support to a third critical component of recovery – local, state, and tribal governments and their eligible private non-profit providers. As the nation recovers from this catastrophic pandemic, providing this funding to governmental entities will help them to continue to provide the essential services needed to ensure a full recovery.

This approach would pump money back into the economy by reimbursing the frontline agencies that have provided the emergency protective measures vital to the life safety of all Americans, and make an earlier economic recovery possible. Using the existing FEMA reimbursement mechanism to provide this additional cost share also provides a reliable way to ensure that the funding will be allocated directly to eligible expenditures. No new program needs to be established.

In conclusion, I respectfully request a Federal cost-share adjustment to 100% for Connecticut, and similar consideration for the other states in our great Nation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Ned Lamont
Governor