

LEAHY: Coronavirus Emergency Relief Bill Will Bring Nearly \$2 Billion to Vermont

*Leahy was the lead Democratic negotiator on a
key emergency spending title of the bill*

WASHINGTON (Thursday, March 26) – Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy announced Wednesday that Vermont is poised to receive nearly \$2 billion in federal resources in the emergency spending package poised to pass Congress this week. The Senate passed it at Midnight. Leahy, as the Vice Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, is a lead negotiator of provisions in the bill that will direct formula funding to the state to combat the spread of COVID-19 and support those on the front lines caring for the sick.

Chief among the federal resources coming to the state will be \$1.25 billion through the Coronavirus Relief Fund, established to support state and counties that are addressing the economic devastation brought about by the virus. Leahy pushed for a small state minimum for the \$150 billion fund, ensuring that Vermont would receive sufficient support.

Leahy said: "Vermont is already reeling from the impacts of the spread of the coronavirus. I have heard from hundreds of small businesses and entities across the state, struggling to support their employees and maintain their businesses. Meanwhile, our healthcare workers and first responders are dealing with supply shortages and management of care. Vermont had a front seat in writing and negotiating this bill. I am pleased that Vermont will receive this critical assistance, and know more will need to be done."

The package unveiled on Wednesday will increase unemployment insurance benefits for displaced workers, and will support small businesses. It includes \$100 billion to provide direct aid to health care institutions, and \$16 billion to replenish the Strategic National Stockpile with critical medical supplies and personal protective equipment supplies, which are distributed to state and local health agencies, hospitals and other healthcare entities facing shortages during emergencies. The bill includes more than \$30 billion to support K-12 education and higher education institutions. It also includes \$9.5 billion to support farmers, including Vermont farmers, as they continue to feed communities and support local food systems.

Leahy announced that through formula grant funding, Vermont will receive an estimate:

- \$5.4 million to support public health preparedness and response activities through the Centers for Disease Control;
- \$4.7 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to support the expansion of community health facilities, child care centers, food banks, and senior services;
- \$5 million in Community Service Block Grants to address the consequences of increasing unemployed and economic disruption;
- \$4.3 million in Child Care Development Block Grants to support child care assistance to health care sector employees, emergency responders, sanitation workers and other workers deemed essential during the corona virus response;
- \$4.6 million for housing assistance grants through the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- \$4.1 million in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP);

- \$20 million to support public transportation emergency relief;
- \$9.6 million to support the state's airports;
- \$3 million in election assistance grants;
- \$2 million to support state and local law enforcement and corrections through the Byrne-Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program;
- \$826,000 through the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities to support museums, libraries and other organizations that have been forced to shut their doors due to the virus;
- \$175,000 to support small- and medium-sized manufacturers recover from the economic impacts of COVID-19 through the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program; and
- \$862,000 in Emergency Preparedness Grants through the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

Leahy said further: "Further stimulus measures will be needed, in Vermont and across the country. I am proud of the response that Governor Scott, his administration, and the leaders in the Vermont legislature to help Vermonters through this crisis. And I am proud of the sense of community that Vermonters are displaying as we work to stem the spread of this public health crisis. As friends and neighbors, we will weather this pandemic."

A summary of the appropriations title of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act is available [here](#).

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