

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 18, 2021

The Honorable Janet Yellen  
Secretary of Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Yellen:

Thank you for your leadership and efforts to get relief in the pockets of the American people as quickly as possible. As you begin issuing guidance and implementing the American Rescue Plan (ARP), we urge you to ensure towns and townships across the country are made eligible for direct relief to the fullest extent possible.

As you know, the ARP included \$362 billion in the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund to ensure first responders, frontline health workers, teachers, and other providers of vital services remain safely on the job as states, local governments, Tribes, and territories continue to roll out vaccines and rebuild their local economies. Not only does this provide additional relief to local governments, it makes far more local governments directly eligible for the assistance, it provides much-needed flexibility in how it can be spent – including to replace lost revenue, and the law provides for a longer timeframe to use it. This support will help our constituents and our communities across the state of Ohio. Section 9901 of the ARP provides the Treasury Secretary with discretion to determine the extent to which townships and other nonentitlement units of government are eligible for direct assistance. This discretion has led to confusion and concern among local towns and townships about their eligibility for direct support. We urge you to use your discretion to interpret this section the fullest extent practicable so that townships receive all the support Congress intended them to receive.

Ohio's townships serve a vital role in local government and daily operations in communities across the state. In the state of Ohio, state law authorizes townships to operate under a basic form of government and to perform a wide variety of functions such as road maintenance, cemetery management, police and fire protection, emergency medical services, solid waste disposal, and zoning.<sup>1</sup> Across the 1,308 townships in Ohio, they are directly responsible for maintaining 41,000 miles of roads and streets, and managing more than 2,400 cemeteries.<sup>2</sup> Given this critical role, Ohio's townships possess powers and perform functions of government meriting direct allocation from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.

After a long, trying year, it is critical we provide this urgent relief to our local governments who are on the front lines serving our communities each and every day. Thank you again for your work and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Tim Ryan  
Member of Congress



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ohiotownships.org/ohio-townships-101>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.