TO: County Board
   Presidents/Executives/Chairpersons/Board
   Members/Administrators

FROM: Joe McCoy, Executive Director
       Illinois State Association of Counties

DATE: March 23, 2020

RE: Action Alert – Contact Our U.S. Senators

The United States Congress is negotiating a massive $1.6 trillion federal supplemental funding bill related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our federal partners at the National Association of Counties (NACo) have been keeping the Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo) apprised of the negotiations.

According to NACo, the following issues MUST be included within the final legislation and ISACo is asking Illinois county officials to IMMEDIATELY contact our United States Senators to urge the inclusion of the following provisions:

**Urge Congress to include direct financial assistance to counties.**
The legislation under discussion would create a State Stabilization Fund to provide money to the states.

As major employers and service providers across the country, counties provide essential public health, public safety and overall essential safety net services.

During this unprecedented pandemic, counties are also spending considerable financial resources to protect the health, safety and economic future of our local residents. This is occurring at the same time county revenues are expected to take a dramatic hit, especially those counties dependent on local sales taxes and other special use taxes.

For these reasons, counties should receive direct funding from the U.S. Treasury.

**Urge Congress to treat state and local governments the same as private employers with respect to payroll tax credits for the new requirements under the new paid sick leave and paid family leave provisions.**
The Second Stimulus bill (H.R. 6201), the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*, which was signed into law on March 18, 2020, creates paid sick leave and family medical leave requirements for all state and local public agency employers.

Unfortunately, the bill treats private companies and public employers very differently. Both are required to provide paid sick leave, but only private sector employers will receive a tax credit to offset the costs.
Public sector employers are explicitly prohibited from receiving these same tax credits, even though the vast majority of local governments (and special purpose districts) pay these same federal payroll taxes (i.e. Social Security and Medicare).

Public employers should be able to offset the cost of paid sick leave in the same manner as private sector employers.

**PLEASE ACT NOW!**
While negotiations toward a bipartisan bill have hit a snag, the discussions continue and a final bill may begin receiving votes as early as today. Please act immediately by contacting our United States Senators to advocate for the aforementioned county needs in the federal supplemental funding bill. Their contact information is below:

**Senator Dick Durbin’s Office**
(202) 224-2152

**Senator Tammy Duckworth’s Office**
(202) 224-2854

Thanks.