

Dear Hon. \_\_\_\_\_

The town of New Lebanon is writing to ask that you support direct funding for local governments in the next federal stimulus package.

The Town of New Lebanon serves around 2,200 residents. We provide services like highway maintenance and snow removal, parks and recreation, permits and licenses, court services, animal control, and contract for fire and ambulance services. We do all of this in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

However, the COVID-19 crisis is putting these services in peril. Estimates state that \$2 billion in sales tax revenue is lost, and even then, towns receive sales tax from the county only if a sharing agreement is in place; counties are not mandated to share sales tax with towns. We have lost revenue in the form of justice court fines, permit fees, sales tax, and mortgage recording tax. New York State faces its own challenges, and as part of the recently adopted state budget, our governor has the ability to scale back funding for local governments, which will be necessary if the federal government does not help.

Providing local governments with federal funding should not be a political issue. It is a matter of protecting all New York State residents and having the resources to continue to provide them with basic necessities, like access to clean water and the ability to safely travel. It is also a matter of economic health; in New York local governments account for 14 percent of jobs statewide. Lack of funding means layoffs and scaling back services.

As fellow elected officials, our goals remain the same – doing what’s best for the people we represent. Your constituents will be better served with direct funding for local governments. We thank you for your work and your support.