

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 18, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Administrator Deanne Criswell
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear President Biden and Administrator Criswell,

We are writing to urge you to immediately extend the 100 percent Federal cost share for Public Assistance for Category B COVID-19 Emergency Protective Measures. Currently, FEMA is authorized to provide a 100 percent Federal cost share for all work eligible for assistance under Public Assistance Category B through April 1, 2022 pursuant to the November 9, 2021 *Presidential Memorandum for the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency on Maximizing Assistance to Respond to COVID-19*.¹

The COVID-19 emergency is far from over. Despite Maine having one of the highest vaccination rates in the country, our hospitals continue to struggle under the strain of new cases. This presents significant challenges to our local governments tasked with providing essential services without contributing to the spread of COVID-19. In the City of Portland in particular, the costs of providing non-congregate sheltering to vulnerable populations in and around the city during the pandemic have been significant. The current 100 percent Federal cost share from FEMA is instrumental in allowing the City to provide these essential services to vulnerable members of our community, including an increasing number of asylum seekers, without taking on a significant and potentially damaging financial burden.

In January 2021, President Biden recognized the need to provide additional federal assistance to States to help respond to the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, and authorized FEMA to increase the Federal cost share for Public Assistance Category B from 75 percent to 100 percent through September 30, 2021. This cost share was then extended through April 1, 2022. We are grateful for this increased federal assistance, and for the administration's actions to extend this funding over the past year. However, we strongly believe that the circumstances requiring this 100 percent Federal cost share are still very present in our communities, and that another extension is necessary and justified.

¹ Memorandum for the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency on Maximizing Assistance to Respond to COVID-19, November 9, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/11/09/memorandum-for-the-secretary-of-homeland-security-and-the-administrator-of-the-federal-emergency-management-agency-on-maximizing-assistance-to-respond-to-covid-19/>.

We strongly urge you to extend the 100 percent Federal cost share for Public Assistance Category B COVID-19 Emergency Protective Measures, and to make this announcement as soon as possible to allow state and local governments to plan accordingly.

Thank you for your timely consideration of this request, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Janet T. Mills
Governor of Maine



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator