



CITY OF ALLENTOWN

44

**RESOLUTION**

**R – 2020**

***Introduced by the Administration and City Council on April 15, 2020***

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**Recommends State Action to Support Local Governments during and after the COVID-19 Crisis**

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**WHEREAS**, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic presents an unprecedented health and welfare threat to the residents of Pennsylvania, especially the most vulnerable; and

**WHEREAS**, the threat also extends to the economic wellbeing of Pennsylvania's municipalities; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 6, 2020 Governor Wolf declared an emergency in Pennsylvania, on March 13, 2020 President Trump proclaimed that the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States constitutes a national emergency, and on March 30, 2020 President Trump issued a major disaster declaration for Pennsylvania; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic is overwhelming the social safety net, public safety, health and medical infrastructure, education facilities, public institutions, local businesses, and the day to day business of Pennsylvania's municipalities; and

**WHEREAS**, local governments are on the frontlines of our nation's public health emergency response and overall public safety efforts and need strong federal, state and local intergovernmental collaboration to address this crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, communities across the commonwealth are experiencing an economic crisis due to whole sectors of the economy coming to a halt at stunning speeds; and

**WHEREAS**, municipalities are experiencing unanticipated expenses due to the COVID-19 crisis, as well as a loss of local revenue streams as the economy grinds to a halt; and

**WHEREAS**, countless community events have been cancelled and local governments are conducting meetings and business online in order to adhere to social distancing protocols as established by the Administration; and

**WHEREAS**, Pennsylvania municipalities will be spending hundreds of millions in the next 6 months on COVID-19 related expenses.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Allentown calls on the PA General Assembly and Administration to take immediate, direct action to support pandemic responses and recovery at the local level.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the City of Allentown urges the PA General Assembly and Administration to enact a local stabilization fund, with direct access provided to every unit of local government in order to

help communities reopen fiscally strong when the time comes, and then be able to help sustain public services going forward.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the City of Allentown calls on the PA General Assembly and Administration to provide substantial emergency appropriations to local governments that will help local governments protect residents and small businesses on the economic margins from financial or other hardships resulting from the extraordinary measures taken in response to COVID-19.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City of Allentown calls upon the PA General Assembly and Administration to refrain from any addition or expansion of mandates on local government without commensurate 100% funding.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City of Allentown calls upon the PA General Assembly and Administration to support and implement additional laws, policies and programs that will provide local government assistance, stimulate the economy and provide relief to residents and businesses, including but not limited to:

- funding to shore up local government employee pensions;
- support for critical infrastructure services that are essential to economic recovery;
- a mix of grants and loans for local economic and community development assistance, including a streamlined distribution process;
- ensuring the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency has enough resources to provide long-term technical, financial and procurement assistance to local governments 66 to manage response and recovery efforts;
- support for local law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services;
- clarity and/or relief from mandates, Sunshine Law requirements, and other permitting and approvals laws and processes hindered by COVID-19 emergency declarations and social distancing directives.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the PA General Assembly and Administration recognize the critical role of local government in the intragovernmental structure of the commonwealth.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be forward to the City of Allentown's state legislative members.