OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

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Governor Bullock Announces Coronavirus Relief Fund Task Force

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced the establishment of the Coronavirus Relief Fund Task Force to provide guidance and advice on how to best use $1.25 billion appropriated to Montana through the Federal CARES Act to assist workers, businesses, and sectors of the economy impacted by COVID-19.

"While we continue to prioritize the health and safety of Montanans, we know many residents are financially impacted by this crisis and need assistance now," Governor Bullock said. **"Today I'm establishing the Coronavirus Relief Fund Task Force to provide guidance and expertise on how to deploy $1.25 billion responsibly and quickly put Montana on a path toward economic recovery and meet the needs in our communities."**

"We will be using our experiences as business owners and community leaders to best support Montanans and businesses financially during this time and as we work towards rebuilding our economy," said Larry Simkins, CEO of the Washington Companies. **"The governor reaching out to the business sectors of the state is a smart move and one that will help to ensure this funding from the CARES Act is best invested in our communities."**

The task force includes 26 Montanans and seeks to represent the industries and sectors impacted by COVID-19 including small business owners, agriculture, nonprofits, economic development organizations, financial institutions, and others.

Over the next two weeks, the task force will examine all sectors of the economy to understand the impacts of COVID-19 on Montanans and consider the unique needs of each region of the state and support a long-term path to economic recovery.

Montana and other states are still waiting on federal guidance on how the $1.25 billion can be spent. The Treasury is expected to release the approximate $1.25 billion appropriated to the state by April 24. The task force will provide its final recommendations to Governor Bullock on April 30.

Montanans can provide input on where the funds are needed at: https://commerce.mt.gov/Cares-Act and is also accessible through the covid19.mt.gov website.

The task force will be led by Larry Simkins of the Washington Companies. Members of the task force include:

- Charlie Beaton – Big Dipper Ice Cream
- Scott Brown – The Base Camp
- Eric Bryson – Montana Association of Counties
- Tim Burton – Montana League of Cities and Towns
- Nick Checota – Logjam Presents
- Randy Chesler – Glacier Bancorp
- Bill Coffee – Stockman Bank
- Colin Davis – Chico Hot Springs
- Shalon Hastings – Fly FisHer Adventures
- Jacquie Helt – Service Employees International Union
- Mike Hope – Rockin R
- Llew Jones – State representative, business owner
- Tom Keneally – Town Pump
- Casey Lozar – Federal Reserve Bank
- Jim Markel – Red Oxx
- Janice Mattson – Mattson Farms
- Liz Moore – Montana Nonprofit Association
- Jim Peterson – Rancher
- Kevin Riley – 1st Interstate Bank
- Mark Semmens – D.A. Davidson
- Jon Sesso – State Senator, business owner
- Larry Simkins – The Washington Companies
- Jason Smith – Montana Office of Indian Affairs
- Sarah Walsh – PayneWest Insurance
- Joe Willauer – Butte Local Development Corporation

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