STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

April 7, 2020

The Honorable Donna Soucy
President
New Hampshire State Senate

The Honorable Steve Shurtleff
Speaker
New Hampshire House of Representatives

Dear Madam President and Speaker Shurtleff,

First and foremost, thank you for your time today. As New Hampshire has confronted the COVID-19 epidemic, we appreciate the cooperation and support that we have received from you and look forward to continuing our close collaboration as we move forward.

As you know, Congress and President Trump moved in an expedient and bipartisan manner to ensure passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This legislation and the substantial funding that it provides will be critical in helping our state navigate through this crisis. New Hampshire has wasted no time in taking steps to operationalize this funding to provide for relief in our health care sector, small business community and individuals.

We appreciate that operationalizing this funding and ensuring that resources are going to the areas of greatest need requires a collaborative process. New Hampshire is ready to be responsible stewards of CARES Act funding to effectively keep Granite Staters safe and preserve our state's economy, but it will require a team of individuals to assist state efforts.

To that end, I have heeded your advice to consider a model similar to the New Hampshire Office of Economic Stimulus, established by Governor Lynch in 2009. In the coming days, I will be establishing the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR). That office, and the position of director, will be critical to overseeing the use and reporting of CARES Act funding to ensure our citizens receive maximum benefit from the COVID-19 Aid.

The office will be charged with the investment and oversight of COVID-19 relief and stimulus funds provided to New Hampshire by the Federal Government. The office will manage the accounting, auditing, legal, and IT requirements surrounding these investments and will ensure transparency and accountability metrics to the citizens of New Hampshire for all relief and stimulus efforts.

Unlike the 2009 stimulus investment process that used the budget to ensure legislative input, the urgency and timing of this crisis does not allow for that course of action. Therefore, I will be creating a bipartisan Legislative Advisory Board within GOFERR, comprised of both Republican and Democrat leadership, to ensure transparency and input to the process. It is my expectation that this advisory group have a voice in investment activities and will meet on a

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consistent basis with the leadership and staff within GOFERR. It is important to ensure that this process has as much accountability, transparency and integrity as possible.

Collectively, this group will help advise GOFERR on industry areas and labor categories in acute need of economic relief. Further, they may make recommendations to my office on how much funding to allocate to each economic area. These include, private industry, non-profits, state and local government needs, health care, and individual relief.

I am inviting the following members of Legislative Leadership to serve on this board:

Senate President, Donna Soucy
Speaker of the House, Steve Shurtleff
Senate Minority Leader, Chuck Morse
House Minority Leader, Richard Hinch
Senate Finance Committee Chairman, Lou D'Allesandro
Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member, John Reagan
House Finance Committee Chairwoman, Mary Jane Wallner
House Finance Committee Ranking Member, Ken Weyler

I am confident that this approach will ensure the transparency and collaboration Granite Staters have come to expect of state leadership, while also allowing the state to be nimble and as responsive as possible to ensure that resources are moving to the areas of greatest need.

Sincerely,

Christopher T. Sununu
Governor

cc: The Honorable Chuck Morse
The Honorable Dick Hinch

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