



March 13, 2020

Senator Jon Tester

Dear Senator Tester,

Thank you for all you are doing in Washington to look out for Montana as we face the emerging threat of coronavirus in our state. As you sort through an immense number of options to make rapid decisions, I respectfully ask you to consider these thoughts which represent the unique role of more than 2,200 nonprofit employers serving Montana during this time:

- Nonprofits are a trusted presence and communications pipeline for many of their constituencies year-round; this is a resource that can be drawn on during crisis. Please count on us at MNA and our colleagues in Montana's nonprofit community to be a partner in whatever ways we can to support Montanans during this time.
- One third of Montana's charitable nonprofits pay wages, employing more than 11% of the state's workforce. We ask that any consideration given to employment-focused relief or stimulus include Montana's nonprofit employers, keeping in mind that SBA loans are not available to charitable nonprofits and commercial loans are often out of reach. And yet we cannot simply close the doors on our constituents as demand increases and resources dwindle.
- Concerned citizens are asking what they can do to help our state's more vulnerable citizens. Your support of temporary giving incentives will directly increase the amount of money nonprofits have to direct toward the most pressing needs of the communities we serve. Nonprofits are trusted to do a lot with a little, standing in the gap in a state in a state where smaller government is valued. Temporarily incentivizing philanthropy in a targeted way gives Montana citizens a practical, immediately actionable avenue for response.

I'm linking here to a letter you've undoubtedly seen, [Why Nonprofits Must Be Included in a COVID-19 Relief and Economic Stimulus Package](#), sent up to the Hill on Wednesday and updated on Thursday. It includes five recommendations. But in the moment, as events are changing rapidly, we ask your immediate consideration of nonprofits in employment related decisions and your adopting a targeted temporary giving incentive to rapidly move more flexible funding into the community. These two steps will allow us to serve most ably and rapidly alongside you and others in Montana to address the crisis we face.

You can count on Montana's nonprofit community to be a partner in your work, and you can count on MNA to be a resource and communications conduit in whatever ways are most helpful to you.

Thank you, and very best in the challenging weeks ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Liz Moore', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Liz Moore, Executive Director