

PETER WELCH  
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CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP

COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4500**

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November 13, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives  
United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader, U.S. House of Representatives  
United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

While negotiations continue on the HEROES Act to address the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, there is one immediate step Congress can take that would provide critical relief to all states: extending the date, now December 30, 2020, by which funds authorized under the CARES Act must be expended or forfeited, to December 31, 2021.

When the CARES Act became law on March 27, 2020, we had hoped that by the end of this year the worst of the pandemic would be behind us. It isn't, unfortunately. And the needs we addressed in the CARES Act continue. By extending the date for use of the authorized funds, all states will have more flexibility and time to use them to meet the impacts of COVID-19.

It would be extremely helpful to Vermont, where our Republican governor and Democratic legislature are working together, to use those funds to help Vermonters through this crisis.

Vermont needs an extension of CARES Act funding for important pandemic related projects including continuing testing for state college students through the spring, bringing broadband to underserved households, and maintaining important housing and homeless programs as winter approaches. Without an extension, the Vermont State College System will not be able to use CARES Act funding to purchase \$500,000 of testing supplies they have ordered to test students this spring.

Likewise, Vermont has identified at least four critical projects to bring broadband to more than one thousand remote homes across the state that will be cancelled if the deadline is not extended. Unfortunately, one project has already been cancelled because the funding deadline has not been extended, denying students the opportunity to learn remotely and workers opportunities to work from home during the pandemic.

Finally, with a cold winter quickly approaching, the funding deadline threatens important projects to help those who may have lost their home or are struggling to stay housed due to the pandemic. These critical projects and many more need the flexibility offered by immediately extending the deadline to expend CARES Act funds.

As we see cases spike nationwide, I know all states would appreciate the flexibility and opportunity an extension would provide. If this were done, it would not interfere with the ongoing negotiations about the HEROES Act or an alternative relief package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Welch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "W".

PETER WELCH  
Member of Congress