

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1304

April 8, 2020

The Honorable Jovita Carranza  
Administrator  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
409 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20416

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Administrator Carranza and Secretary Mnuchin:

I write to request your immediate attention to the implementation of the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act*, known as the *CARES Act* (Public Law 116-136), signed into law on March 27, 2020. The *CARES Act* provided \$377 billion in immediate financial assistance to our nation's small businesses grappling with continued economic challenges as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Specifically, the *CARES Act* created the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) under the SBA's 7(a) loan program to provide immediate and much-needed cash-flow assistance through 100 percent federally guaranteed loans to eligible employers who retain their employees.

Within the *CARES Act*, Congress expressed its intent that lenders and agents participating in the SBA's PPP prioritize the financial needs of small businesses in underserved and rural markets when processing and disbursing loans. I urge you to quickly issue guidance to lenders and agents that clearly outlines how lenders can best serve small businesses in rural and underserved communities, including agricultural operations and farms where wages are not paid in the conventional sense. It is critical that lenders and agents receive clear and expeditious guidance to ensure that farmers, women, minority and veteran-owned small businesses and nonprofits in rural and underserved communities are not left behind.

I appreciate your immediate attention and your continued engagement in supporting our nation's most vulnerable small businesses.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator