

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 22, 2020

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin:

We write today urging the Department of Treasury (Treasury) to redouble its efforts to make Economic Impact Payments available to the most vulnerable populations—including those without access to the internet who cannot file a tax return electronically. We appreciate your decision to ensure that Social Security retirement and disability beneficiaries, as well as Supplemental Security Income recipients, can receive these payments automatically without filing a tax return. These course corrections were the right move.

The coronavirus public health emergency has come at a great cost to many Americans, but undoubtedly has had a disproportionate impact on low-income families, seniors, rural communities, and communities of color. To bring much needed economic relief to these populations, on a bipartisan basis, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which authorized direct cash assistance to be sent to most Americans.

To the credit of both the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), in just a matter of a few short weeks, American taxpayers are already receiving their Economic Impact Payments in their checking accounts. While these efforts deserve recognition, the CARES Act also requires that Treasury coordinate with other federal agencies to conduct a public awareness campaign to ensure individuals who did not file a tax return for 2018 or 2019 are aware of their eligibility for the payment. As you conduct this public awareness campaign, we urge you to consider the unique challenges that low-income and rural Americans may face in filing a tax return online.

The Federal Communications Commission's 2019 annual Broadband Deployment Report found that more than 21 million Americans are without access to high-speed internet. Due to gaps in our nation's broadband maps, the number of Americans who lack adequate broadband coverage may be much higher. Furthermore, a 2019 Pew Research Survey found that 50 percent of non-broadband users cite cost as a reason they do not have broadband at home. These Americans face a significant barrier in their ability to file a simple tax return online if they are not eligible to receive an automatic payment. Due to current social distancing guidelines, enlisting the help of a family member or friend with internet access is not a feasible option for these individuals.

Treasury must continue to focus on ensuring that those who need this assistance the most can receive their Economic Impact Payment as soon as possible. We request that you leverage the resources and information at your disposal or partner with the necessary federal agencies to get this relief into the hands of those who need it the most, including Americans who do not have

internet access. Time is of the essence and we hope that you will act quickly and decisively in addressing our concerns. We look forward to your response and we will continue working to address the needs of the most vulnerable.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

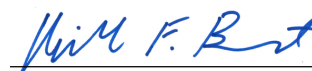


Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Doug Jones  
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

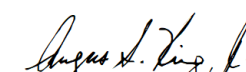
/s/ Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator




Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator




Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator



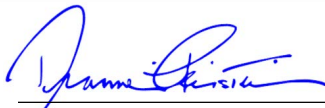
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Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator




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Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator




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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



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Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



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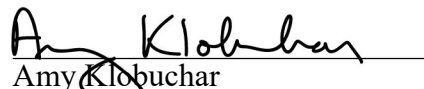
Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator

/s/ Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



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Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



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Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator

/s/ Jack Reed  
United States Senator