



Steve Bullock
Governor of Montana
Chair

Larry Hogan
Governor of Maryland
Vice Chair

Scott D. Pattison
Executive Director and CEO

September 10, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Senator Schumer, Speaker Ryan and Representative Pelosi:

On behalf of the nation's governors, we urge immediate action on critical programs set to expire in the coming weeks. Governors believe that Congress should prioritize the passage of legislation vital to states, including: appropriations, the Farm Bill, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the Federal Aviation Act.

Appropriations

While governors recognize that Congress has many funding challenges to address, we urge you to uphold the federal government's commitment to states by passing appropriations without the threat of a lapse in federal funding or shutdown. Federal programs are an integral part of state services to citizens. Any delay or cuts to core programs can disrupt state and local operations and lead to under-funded federal mandates. This year, governors have asked Congress to preserve federal funding streams from the National Guard and disaster assistance to K-12, early childhood education and workforce training. We encourage Congress to uphold the state-federal partnership through timely, adequate appropriations to states.

Federal Aviation Act (FAA)

Aviation is a key component of a balanced transportation system and is linked to regional growth and economic development. However, unless a fifth extension, or a long-term reauthorization is passed by the end of September, federal aviation programs are once again at risk of a partial shutdown. Governors urge Congress to ensure that federal aviation programs continue to operate seamlessly and look forward to continuing to work with the Senate to pass an extended FAA reauthorization bill.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Since 1996, TANF has provided federal support and flexibility to states to implement innovative approaches in serving the nation's neediest families. As its expiration approaches, governors urge Congress to provide an extension of this vital program. Much work remains, and an extension is necessary for Congress to take a thoughtful and thorough approach to improving and reauthorizing the program. Governors stand ready to work with you toward a bipartisan multi-year reauthorization.



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Farm Bill

Authorization for the Farm Bill must not be allowed to lapse at the end of the month, particularly during the current agricultural downturn. Governors support completion of an on-time, bipartisan five-year Farm Bill. During the current conference process, Congress should come together around legislation that prioritizes and preserves: conservation programs, addressing animal diseases, the Specialty Crop Block Grant, the Market Access Program, the United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Disruption in authorizations for these important programs would be damaging to our farmers and ranchers, who deserve certainty and stability as they plan for this and future farm years.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

For decades, governors have used LWCF grants to fund parks and other outdoor recreation initiatives. This program has been an instrumental tool for states to address their conservation needs. We encourage you to quickly reach an agreement on reauthorization. Any lapse would create budgetary uncertainties for states that rely on LWCF to support recreation and conservation initiatives.

Cooperative federalism between states and the federal government requires compromise and casting aside partisanship in pursuit of positive results for citizens that depend on the uninterrupted services our governments provide.

Governors have great faith that cooperative federalism will occur on the programs addressed in this letter and continually stand ready to assist as Congress works on behalf of the American people.

Sincerely,

Governor Steve Bullock
Chair
National Governors Association

Governor Larry Hogan
Vice Chair
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