



Nonprofit Westchester appreciates your ongoing advocacy on behalf of the nonprofit sector as we continue to address the many intense challenges resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. We ask that renewed attention be paid and action taken to secure the next phase of Federal stimulus funding.

We are supportive of the provisions of the HEROES Act passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on May 15th that significantly address issues vital to the nonprofit sector, including provisions immigrants who are documented and undocumented. (Please see statement below.)

Nonprofit organizations have been on the front lines of providing essential services since day one. While it is well-known that the demand for vital nonprofit services has increased, we are concerned about recent public warnings that funding for our sector is in serious jeopardy from other levels of government as they struggle to address budget shortfalls brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, we know these budget cuts most often impact those without a strong voice and without the resources to advance their needs; these cuts disproportionately impact children, people with disabilities, older adults, and nonprofit clients and the nonprofit workforce – representing a significant percentage of women, children, and low-income, under-insured people of color.

New York State and Westchester County cannot recover from the pandemic without continued and considerable support from the Federal government. The New York State Division of the Budget projects a \$13.3 billion shortfall, or 14%, in revenue from the Executive Budget Forecast released in January and estimates a \$61 billion decline through FY 2024 as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Spending reductions from the levels proposed in the Executive Budget include an \$8.2 billion reduction in “aid-to-localities,” a broad spending category that includes funding for health care, K-12 schools, and higher education as well as support for local governments, public transit systems, and the State’s not-for-profit partners who deliver critical services to the most vulnerable New Yorkers. We cannot let this happen.

Again, we are seeking renewed public attention and action on the next round of federal stimulus funding. We offer our support and partnership to you in any way possible.

Federal Stimulus Funding and The Immigrant Community

The CARES Act has failed our nation's immigrant population. For immigrants without legal status, federal coronavirus relief is out of reach. Immigrants who are undocumented are continuing to work in fields deemed essential by NY State, ranging from medical care, to farming, to grocery stores, to domestic workers and more. While many of these workers remain employed, many have been "let-go" – none have a financial safety net.

One of the most touted aspects of the CARES Act has been the cash rebate program the bill created that put up to \$1,200 (or more in some cases) into the pockets of Americans who are struggling because of COVID-19. These rebates are dependent on a number of criteria, chief among those is that recipients must have a social security number. This is, at the very least, a major oversight and gap in the bill because many immigrants do not have a social security number and are not required to have one. Instead, they have an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), which they use to pay taxes in the U.S. Worse still, is an issue within the structure of the bill that can cause the loss of cash rebates for immigrants with social security numbers. ITIN users file jointly with a spouse or child with an SSN – so, in this case, everyone in the household has been denied access to the cash assistance. While these individuals are paying their fair share of taxes, they are still being left behind by the CARES Act.

Immigrants in the U.S. make up more nearly 14% of the population and in 2018, those citizens paid more than \$4.5 billion in taxes. Yet they are not fully protected by the CARES Act.

We are glad to see that the HEROES Act takes positive steps in making direct payments available to individuals with Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITINS) and other "mixed status" households and advocate for this provision to be included in the final version of upcoming legislation.

<https://www.stilt.com/blog/2020/04/the-cares-act-fails-immigrants-in-the-u-s>