

## Report from Washington – HEROES Act

On Tuesday, the House introduced the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (HEROES Act), H.R. 6800. The approximately \$3 trillion package prioritizes funding for state, local, territorial and tribal governments, hazard pay, coronavirus testing and contract tracing and isolation measures, and new support for housing-related costs.

The bill supports higher education with \$90 billion for a State Fiscal Stabilization Fund for grants to States to support statewide and local funding for elementary and secondary schools and public postsecondary institutions and \$10.15 billion to help alleviate burdens associated with the coronavirus for both colleges and students, including \$1.7 billion for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions, \$20 million for Howard University, \$11 million for Gallaudet University, \$11 million for the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, and \$8.4 billion for other institutions of higher education.

Within the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee's jurisdiction, the bill also includes \$100 million for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, \$28 million to support existing farm stress programs, \$50 million for local farmers, farmers markets, and other local food outlets impacted by COVID-19, and \$16.5 billion in direct payments to agricultural producers. Additional support is provided for nutrition programs, including a 15% increase in SNAP benefit levels and increased flexibility for SNAP Nutrition Education.

The House is expected to meet at 9:00am on Friday to consider the legislation. It is important to note that the House proposal is the first step in what is expected to be a prolonged process towards enactment of the next COVID-19 relief package.

Links to additional information may be found below:

[HEROES Act](#)  
[Section-by-Section](#)  
[One Pager](#)

While the House bill does not include the additional \$380 million the BAA requested for NIFA, we strongly encourage you to turn your focus towards the Senate. As such, we encourage you to contact your state's Senators, articulate the impact of COVID-19, and justify the need for supplemental funding for the agricultural research and extension programs at your university. The feedback we continue to receive from congressional offices has been for us to make specific connections between the need for additional funds and direct COVID-19 impacts on institutions. Your inclusion of specific examples in your discussions with Senators will be most impactful.

For additional information and a sample email, please reference the [April 23 Call to Action](#).

**THE CORNERSTONE TEAM**