April 6, 2020

Dear Elected Officials of Washington State,

We in the nonprofit community are grateful for your leadership and are proud to work side-by-side with you to support our communities during this difficult time. We share your commitment to ensure the wellbeing of Washington's residents.

At the same time, we are concerned that no measures have been taken to address the strength of nonprofit organizations in responding to this crisis. Many of the current or proposed responses do not provide the necessary support needed by nonprofits to continue their efforts in mitigating the downstream impacts of social and economic turmoil. The COVID-19 pandemic makes our work more essential than ever. Specific recommendations for actions that will support nonprofits include:

- **Establish an emergency grant program for nonprofits** significantly affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The federal disaster loan program is not a practical solution for many nonprofits as they do not have the means to repay loans without putting vital services in jeopardy over the long-term.

- **Be flexible regarding how current government funding is used by nonprofits.** Many of us are having to adapt how we deliver services during this time period and will experience interruptions in service in some cases. We depend on this revenue to pay our staff and keep our organizations running so that we can ultimately support our communities.

- **Add a seat for nonprofits on the COVID-19 Economic Impact Task Force** so that the perspective of nonprofit organizations can be included as solutions and responses are crafted by the task force.

- **Include nonprofits who self-insure or utilize an employer trust for unemployment benefits** in the new emergency unemployment benefits program.

- **Address rural and low-income community access to technology and broadband.** Provide funds for technology and training so nonprofits can move to remote work and virtual service models when possible.

Nonprofits play a vital role in building economic, emotional, physical, developmental, and social well-being for all community members. Washington State is home to approximately 30,000 federally-recognized nonprofits, which employ 269,361 people in this state, all working for our collective benefit. For example:

- **Human service providers restore well-being** when it is disrupted by the unpredictable life storms that can affect us all, like a physical or mental health challenge, caring for an ailing loved one, losing a job, or experiencing the trauma of interpersonal or community violence.

- **Human rights advocacy organizations enforce and expand the rights of people who suffer injustice because of poverty or discrimination.** They fight for dignity, freedom, justice, equality, and peace for all communities, involving those who have been historically underrepresented.

- **Community development organizations revitalize low-income, underserved neighborhoods that have experienced significant disinvestment.** Their work supports development of affordable housing, improves community health through economic development, and plays a
critical role in building community wealth.

- **Environmental conservation groups seek to protect the environment against misuse or degradation from human forces.** They preserve plants, animals and natural communities by protecting the lands, waters and air they need to survive – thereby improving the environment for all of us.

- **Arts and cultural organizations help build healthy, vibrant, equitable communities.** They bring joy, inspiration, and vitality to our all Washingtonians and provide a direct economic benefit through revenue and tourism.

Every sector of the nonprofit community is facing unprecedented demands as a result of the coronavirus epidemic, and it is challenging our ability to support the people and communities that rely on us. Current relief efforts miss the mark in supporting this essential portion of the Washington State workforce. Examples of these challenges include:

- Nonprofits, particularly service providers, are being called on to adapt quickly to new operating requirements, educate community members, and support vulnerable community members **without any new resources**.

- Many nonprofit service providers, such as food banks and behavioral health providers, are **facing increased demand for services**.

- Nonprofits tend to be under-resourced and under-staffed in the best of times. A drop-off in staff and volunteers due to illness, vulnerability to illness, and families in need of child care are posing **threats to program continuity**.

- Many nonprofits are **already suffering significant financial losses** due to cancelled fundraising events, performances, conferences and other revenue streams. Like small businesses, nonprofits require help to recover economically.

To support the wellbeing of our state’s nonprofit infrastructure, we recommend that you **include nonprofits in all relief and recovery funding** that is available in our state. We request a virtual meeting with you this week to share more information about the critical role nonprofits are playing in the COVID-19 response across the state and discuss opportunities to provide needed support for this vital work and include nonprofits in creating the solutions. Please contact Laura Pierce at Washington Nonprofits, laura@washingtonnonprofits.org, 206-412-8362, to schedule a meeting.

We look forward to partnering with you on continuing Washington state’s leadership in addressing this ongoing crisis.

Sincerely,

Washington Nonprofits

501 Commons
Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services
African American Veterans Housing and Human Services Group
Aging in PACE Washington (AiPACE)
AHAT Homecare
Alexander Hamilton Scholars
API Chaya
Artisans at the Dahmen Barn
ArtsFund
Associated Ministries of Tacoma-Pierce County
Attain Housing

Bellevue Youth Choirs
Bleeding Disorder Foundation of Washington
Blue Mountain Action Council
Blue Mountain Heart to Heart
Boxes Because
Boys & Girls Clubs of Bellevue
Boys & Girls Clubs of Benton and Franklin
Counties
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Columbia Basin
Boys & Girls Clubs of Lewis County
Boys & Girls Clubs of South Puget Sound
Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Washington
PCAF (Pierce County AIDS Foundation)  
Phinney Neighborhood Association  
Pioneer Human Services  
Planned Parenthood of Greater Washington and North Idaho  
Pomegranate Center  
Pottery Northwest  
Program for Early Parent Support  
Queen Anne Helpline  
Rebuilding Mid-Columbia  
Rebuilding Together South Sound  
Refugee Connections Spokane  
Resolution Washington  
Rod's House  
Rural Resources Community Action  
RVC  
Safe Harbor Support Center  
Scleroderma Foundation Northwest Chapter  
Seattle Chess Club  
Seattle Chinese Garden Society  
Seattle Human Services Coalition  
Seattle Works  
Senior Life Resources -- Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels  
Shared Housing Services  
Sharp Consulting Group  
Skamania County Chamber of Commerce  
Skamania EDC  
Skookum Kids  
Sno-Valley Senior Center  
Solutions for Good  
Sound Experience  
Sound Outreach  
Southwest Youth and Family Services  
Spark Central  
Spokane Hearing Oral Program of Excellence (HOPE)  
STEM Paths Innovation Network  
Stevenson Downtown Association  
Stillaguamish Senior Center  
Studio East  
Studio East Training for the Performing Arts  
Sunrise Outreach Center of Yakima  
Tacoma Farmers Market  
Tacoma Historical Society  
Tacoma Urban League  
Tacoma-Pierce County Affordable Housing Consortium  
Team Read  
Technology and Information For All - TiNFA  
Teens In Public Service  
The Beyond Project  
The Council on Aging & Human Services  
The DOVE Project  
The HUB - Center for Seniors  
The Mockingbird Society  
The Ostara Group  
The Service Board  
The Valtas Group  
Together!  
Toppenish Community Chest  
Tri Cities Younglife  
Tri-Cities Cancer Center  
Tri-Cities Cancer Center Foundation  
Triumph Treatment Services  
Unemployment Services Trust  
United Way of King County  
United Way of Pierce County  
United Ways of the Pacific Northwest  
University Heights Center  
Vashon Center for the Arts  
Vashon Youth and Family Services  
VIKING ROBOTICS 2928  
Village Community Services  
Volunteers of America Eastern Washington  
Wags to Riches Animal Rescue and Sanctuary, Inc.  
Walla Walla Symphony  
Wallingford Community Senior Center  
Washington Association for Career and Technical Education  
Washington Bikes  
Washington Food Coalition  
Washington Global Health Alliance  
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Washington State Community Action Partnership  
Washington State Public Health Association  
Washington Trails Association  
Whidbey Island Center for the Arts  
White Salmon Valley Education Foundation  
WithinReach  
Women & Children’s Free Restaurant & Community Kitchen  
Work Opportunities  
Yakima Valley Community Foundation  
Young Women Empowered  
Youth and Family Link  
Youth Development Executives of King County  
YWCA Seattle|King|Snohomish  
YWCA Spokane