



September 15, 2021

Dear County Commissioners:

Maine counties have important decisions ahead on how they will distribute the \$260 million in federal stimulus arriving as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. On behalf of the Maine Association of Nonprofits (MANP) Advocacy Network, we write to offer our support and resources as you navigate this critical path toward recovery.

Since its founding in 1994, MANP's mission has been to strengthen the leadership, voice and organizational effectiveness of Maine nonprofits. We have grown into the state's largest network of organizations dedicated to the common good with more than 1000 nonprofit members and 160 partners in government, business and philanthropy, representing every county in Maine and the full range of nonprofit missions and sizes.

In response to COVID-19, Maine's nonprofits stepped up without hesitation to serve their communities. By increasing services, modifying existing programs, creating new ones, and delivering information in ways they've never had to before, they were essential partners in Maine's response.

We encourage you to continue this collaboration as you determine the distribution of ARPA funding. Partnerships with Maine's nonprofits will allow for funding to be distributed effectively and efficiently, leveraging resources, relationships, and strengths to serve communities even better. Additionally, nonprofits are perfectly positioned to maximize public benefits with their deep knowledge of community needs, reach, and existing relationships, particularly in low-income and underserved or hard-to-reach populations.

To assist with your work, we wanted to share the following report from the National Council of Nonprofits. [Strengthening State and Local Economies in Partnership with Nonprofits: Principles, Recommendations, and Models for Investing Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds](#) provides substantive guidance on the role nonprofits can fill in the allocation process and examples of successful programs from across the country.

We also want to offer our personal assistance in connecting you to nonprofit leaders and executives in your communities. As economic drivers, employers of a significant portion of the workforce, and vital partners for essential services addressing community needs, they can offer a unique perspective. While the spending decisions will ultimately be yours to make, we respectfully encourage you to include input from community stakeholders from business and nonprofit leaders to local officials and activists as a part of your process.



Maine's nonprofit community is one of the most robust and vibrant in the country, playing a significant role in the state's reputation as a great place to live and raise a family and our organizations are an integral part of recovery efforts. We thank you for your dedication and we offer our assistance in this once-in-a-generation opportunity to build back stronger than before.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hutchins
Executive Director

Maine Association of Nonprofits

Advocacy Network members

Cultural Alliance of Maine
Friends of Casco Bay
Goodwill Industries of Northern
New England
Kennebec Behavioral Health
Maine Community Action Association
Nature Conservancy
Onion Foundation

Preble Street
SeniorsPlus
Shalom House, Inc.
Spurwink Services
Tri-County Mental Health
Volunteers of America—Northern
New England
YMCA Alliance of Northern New England