



U.S. SENATOR
GARY PETERS

THE CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT

SUPPORT FOR RURAL MICHIGAN

The CARES Act includes nearly \$50 billion for support for agriculture and rural America, including \$9.5 billion in emergency funds for agriculture producers, including fresh fruit and vegetable growers, dairy farmers and livestock producers, along with local food systems like farmers markets. In addition, the legislation includes \$100 billion for hospitals including in rural communities. For a comprehensive list of rural assistance programs, visit [here](#).

- **Hospitals: \$100 billion in direct payments to health care providers:** Through grants or other mechanisms, the Secretary of U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) will reimburse providers for health care expenses or lost revenues due to Coronavirus. Eligible providers include hospitals and other entities that provide Coronavirus diagnoses, testing, or care. HHS will make these reimbursements on a rolling basis. Examples of how the funds can be used include:
 - Constructing temporary structures, leasing property, or retrofitting facilities to expand surge capacity
 - Purchasing medical supplies and equipment, like personal protective equipment and testing supplies
 - Expanding or providing training to the frontline workforce

HHS will establish a process to accept applications from providers.

Advanced payments for hospitals: Hospitals can access additional funding through an expanded program for Medicare accelerated payments. Upon their request, hospitals may receive advanced Medicare payments on a periodic or lump sum basis to cover up to a six month period. Critical access hospitals would be able to receive an advanced payment at a 125 percent payment level to have extra funds on hand to cover costs. Hospitals are not be required to start paying down the loan for four months and would have at least 12 months to complete repayment without a requirement to pay interest. Please contact CMS for more information.

● **Rural Development**

- The bill provides \$25 million to support the Distance Learning and Telemedicine program, which supports rural communities accessing telecommunications-enabled information, audio and video equipment, and related advanced technologies for students, teachers, and medical professionals. To apply for grants or for more information, visit [here](#).
- \$100 million is provided to the ReConnect program for grants that cover the costs of construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service in eligible rural areas. To apply, more information is available [here](#).



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- **Small Business relief** – The bill provides \$562 million to ensure that Small Business Administration (SBA) has the resources to provide [Economic Injury Disaster Loans \(EIDL\)](#) to businesses that need financial support during this difficult time. These loans will help businesses keep their doors open and pay their employees.
- **Tax relief:** Businesses will now be able to immediately write off renovations to their stores, after they were accidentally left out of the so-called “qualified improvement property provision” in the 2017 tax legislation. The change is estimated to provide \$15 billion in tax savings per year for those businesses.
- **Essential Air Service** – includes \$56 million to maintain existing air service to rural communities. This funding is necessary to offset the reduction in overflight fees that help pay for the EAS program.
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** – The bill includes \$15.5 billion in additional funding for SNAP to ensure all Americans, including seniors and children, receive nutrition assistance.
- **Child Nutrition Programs** – The bill includes \$8.8 billion in additional funding for Child Nutrition Programs in order to ensure children receive meals while school is not in session. Meals are available for any child under 18 (or up to 26 if enrolled in special education programming), not only those who receive free or reduced lunch. For a map of school meal sites across MI, visit [this website](#).
- **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)** – The bill provides \$450 million for the TEFAP program. With many communities suffering from job losses, food banks have seen increased needs. These funds are critical so food banks can continue to assist those Americans most in need.
- **Expanded Access to Telehealth:** The bill provides the Federal Communications Commission with \$200 million to support additional telehealth services and capacity, ensuring Americans have access to providers in rural areas and at home. Additionally, the CARES Act newly allows for a remote recertification of hospice eligibility. To learn more about rural Telehealth, [click here](#).

If you have any additional questions about the federal resources available, please go to www.peters.senate.gov/coronavirus.