

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 12, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray, Ranking Member Collins, Chair Granger, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We write to urge strong support for fulfilling the request of interior city Mayors, including the City of Denver's Mayor Mike Johnston, to appropriate \$5 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Shelter and Services Program (SSP) for Fiscal Year 2025.

Since February 2023, the City of Denver (the City) has received over 40,000 migrants, many of whom have been sent to Colorado from the southwest border. The City has spent more than \$58 million on its response, and is projecting a budget deficit of \$120 million—a fraction of which the federal government has agreed to reimburse.

The migrants arriving in the past year represent 4.6% of the City's population, which significantly strains the City's housing, education, and health care systems. As of last week, Denver was sheltering approximately 730 people in city-run shelters. Denver Public Schools has enrolled over 3,000 new-to-country students this academic year, leading to an \$18 million funding gap. Amid these challenges, Denver Health, a pivotal health care provider, has offered a wide range of services to the community and provided unprecedented amounts of uncompensated care. Between October 1, 2022 and January 3, 2024, the hospital provided care to nearly 8,000 patients from Venezuela, Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Ecuador, totaling over 20,000 appointments.

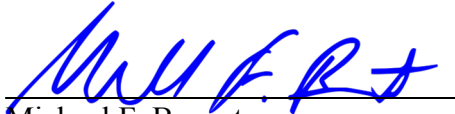
Denver has dedicated significant resources to manage the migrant influx, including \$8.1 million on hotel accommodations, \$7 million in resettlement transportation costs, and nearly \$17.2 million on staffing. As the City settles outstanding invoices, officials anticipate to incur an additional \$14.3 million in expenses. To date, the City has received \$4 million from an FY24 SSP award. Despite those funds, the City still anticipates a \$120 million budget deficit for the year.

The City of Denver is not the only city in Colorado responding to this crisis. From Aurora to Carbondale, and many communities in between, local governments, and nonprofits are straining their budgets and resources to support newcomers.


The FEMA SSP funding is essential to support state and local government social service and nonprofit organizations that aid migrants. Without this support, Colorado communities will continue to face an immense financial burden.

We look forward to working with you and other Congressional leaders to fund the FEMA SSP at this level in FY 2025 to support Colorado entities and the communities, including migrants, they serve.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



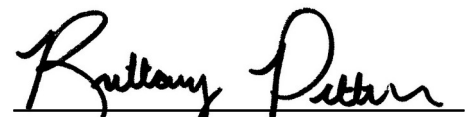
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Member of Congress



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress



Ysaira Caraveo, M.D.
Member of Congress