



**Adam J. Bello**  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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News from the Office of

**ADAM BELLO**

**MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

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## **Monroe County Executive Adam Bello and Local Leaders Call for Federal Aid to Localities Amid COVID-19 Pandemic**

*Measures, Sponsored by Congressman Joe Morelle, Would Help to Offset Projected Budget Deficits for State, Local and Municipal Governments Across the Country*

ROCHESTER, NY -- Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today called for the passage of federal legislation designed to aid state, local and municipal governments in addressing revenue shortfalls and budget deficits amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that has shuttered regional economies for the last two months. Specifically, Bello called for the passage of the Coronavirus Assistance for States Act and the State Operations Stabilization (SOS) Act, which are sponsored by Congressman Joe Morelle and would provide direct aid to Monroe County and many other localities facing revenue shortages. Bello also called for the passage of the Coronavirus Community Relief Act, which would provide similar relief to communities of less than 500,000 people.

“Monroe County, like so many other local and municipal governments across New York and throughout the Nation, is facing incredible fiscal and economic challenges as a result of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. But I want to be clear – this is a direct result of a drastic decrease in revenue like local sales tax and not the result of an increase in expenditures or overspending,” **said County Executive Bello**. “In the face of such revenue losses, we are hopeful that with the passage of these federal measures and midyear budget adjustments, we will be able to offset our current budget deficit and continue to deliver critically needed services, without having to further burden the hard working men, women and families of Monroe County.”

The State Operations Stabilization (SOS) Act would expand the Coronavirus Relief Fund, which was enacted as part of the CARES Act. SOS would allow localities to utilize funds as a replacement for lost revenue or to make up a deficit resulting from lost tax revenue due to disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. This would help prevent many state and local governments, including New York State and Monroe County, from being forced to cut critical social, community, and educational services to make up for shortfalls caused by lost revenue.

The Coronavirus Assistance for States Act will provide additional funding and flexibility for states and tribal governments to adequately protect and care for their residents and help begin the economic recovery from COVID-19. The funding for each state or tribal government is determined by their relative population and is expected to equal about \$1,000 per person for each state or tribal government. The funding provides much-needed relief for states to cover the necessary expenditures incurred during the COVID-19 outbreak, replace revenue lost during the public health emergency, or contribute to the economic recovery for their region.

“From education to law enforcement to first responders, so many of our essential social services rely on financial resources from our counties and towns that have been disrupted by this pandemic,” **said Congressman Joe Morelle.** “Communities across our nation will continue to feel the effects of COVID-19 for months to come – that’s why it’s so important that we take action to ensure local governments have the tools they need to respond to this unprecedented challenge. I’ve introduced legislation to help do just that, and I’m committed to working alongside the County Executive and all of our local partners to provide the stability families need now more than ever.”

The Coronavirus Community Relief Act would remove a cap included in the previously signed CARES Act, which stipulated that only communities of 500,000 people or more could receive federal funding under this legislation. With the passage of Coronavirus Community Relief Act, countless communities in Monroe County and the Finger Lakes region could become eligible for federal aid under the CARES Act.

Monroe County is currently facing a budget shortfall of \$68 - \$122 million as a result of lost revenue from the COVID-19 economic shutdown of the last several months. However, with the passage of this legislation, Monroe County could utilize part of the \$129 million it previously received in federal funding through the CARES Act to make up for this shortfall. This would allow local government and school districts to retain first responders, teachers and other critical staff.

In addition to helping offset financial shortfalls for Monroe County, County Executive Bello is advocating for the ability to distribute a portion of this federal aid to other local partners that are also feeling the impacts of lower than projected sales tax revenues. Without additional flexibility surrounding the use of these federal funds, however, County Executive Bello would have to make reductions to county staff and services, and delay many capital improvement projects.

“Local municipal governments across the state are on the front line every budget cycle to prepare responsible budgets that deliver required services with no increased spending. The unprecedented magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic has directly hit one of local government’s budget lifelines—our revenue line,” **said Penfield Supervisor Tony LaFountain.** “With the loss of revenue from sales tax, mortgage tax, recreation, courts, library, and other areas, municipalities will have no option other than to cut services and/or raise taxes at a time when many residents are facing lay-offs, furloughs and job loss. The passage of Coronavirus

Assistance for States Act and the SOS Act sponsored by Congressman Morelle will provide a stabilizing financial foundation to local governments during these extraordinary times.”

“Monroe County School Districts, like local municipalities, are facing severe budget cuts due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Certainly the loss of sales tax revenue, coupled with decreases in state aid, has made budget planning very difficult. This legislation would help replace a portion of these losses and most importantly, help preserve our educational programs,” **said Penfield Superintendent Thomas Putnam, who serves as President of the Monroe County Council of School Superintendents.**

“People’s lives and livelihoods are at stake, not just here in Monroe County, but across the country. We should not be asking governments to choose between supporting our public health and frontline workers or the economic and fiscal wellbeing of our community. But without this legislation, that is exactly what we are going to have to do. That is why I am proud to stand with Congressman Morelle and the residents of our community in support of these measures,” **Bello concluded.**

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