



December 4, 2020

Senator Rob Portman
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Portman,

Thank you for your openness to the new bipartisan COVID Emergency Relief Framework unveiled Tuesday by Senators Romney, Collins, Cassidy, Murkowski and some of your Democratic colleagues. We agree with your statement that “the Senate must act now to avoid further economic suffering.”

The need for relief in Ohio and across the country is tremendous, and the McConnell plan is deeply inadequate: It leaves out many of our most pressing needs. Despite bipartisan support for these provisions, there’s no food assistance for struggling families and children, no rental assistance or eviction protections to keep people from losing their homes, no new aid for state and local governments (beyond some limited education funding), and only a one-month extension of unemployment insurance benefits. The McConnell plan is simply unacceptable. We urge you to reject it.

The framework presented Tuesday by a bipartisan group of senators is a more solid foundation for a deal, though it also needs to be improved to adequately address the most urgent needs at this time. For example, it does not extend the federal eviction moratorium and does not contain enough aid for state and local governments to avoid cuts and layoffs that would take money out of local economies.

Ohioans need you to keep working with your colleagues to provide the necessary COVID relief before the end of the year, including aid to state and local governments, eviction protections and rental assistance so people can stay in their homes, increased SNAP benefits, and extended jobless benefits.

We agree with you that the Senate should not adjourn without passing meaningful COVID relief. The McConnell plan is inadequate. The bipartisan framework presented Tuesday is better, and you could make it better still. Please continue to work with your Senate colleagues to strengthen that bill and pass it as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hannah Halbert".

Hannah Halbert
Executive Director

CLEVELAND

3631 Perkins Avenue, Suite 4C-East
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

P 216.361.9801

COLUMBUS

125 E. Broad Street, 4th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

P 614.221.4505

W policymattersohio.org

T @PolicyMattersOH