

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 9, 2022

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell:

As the Senate completes work on H.R. 2471, the *Fiscal Year 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act* (“the Omnibus”), to fund the government, I write in strong opposition to Section 1306(d), which rescinds approximately \$7 billion from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CSLFRF) that were included in the *American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) from the 30 states that have not yet received their second tranche of payments, including Georgia.

This rescission is estimated to result in an over \$400 million cut to Georgia’s CSLFRF allocation. These funds have been critical to investments that have bolstered Georgia’s strong economic recovery, including broadband to unserved and underserved areas, water and sewer infrastructure repairs, and other investments to mitigate the economic fallout from the pandemic in our state.

Moreover, this provision would unfairly penalize states like Georgia that saw quicker economic and labor force recovery. This provision only rescinds funds from the 30 states, including Georgia, where Congress authorized the U.S. Department of Treasury to split funding into two equal tranches based on the state’s unemployment rate when compared to pre-pandemic levels. Based on this provision, and because Georgia’s strong economy resulted in a historic recovery of the labor market to pre-pandemic level, Treasury split Georgia’s allocated \$4.8 billion in federal investments into two equal payments. Georgia has yet to receive the \$2.4 billion second payment, and this provision would dramatically cut that second payment by approximately 18%, resulting in a \$400 million cut to Georgians.

In Georgia, and twenty-nine other states, we saw unemployment bounce back quicker—a fact that Congress should celebrate. Instead, this provision would punish working families and small businesses, who have persevered through a recovery that remains incomplete. This policy is wrong-headed and unacceptable. At minimum, Congress should treat all states and territories equally, not based on an arcane decision of whether they received federal dollars in one or two equal payments.

Finally, this provision would hinder Georgia's efforts to make critical investments in our communities, which are still recovering from the pandemic. For example, Georgia used its first payment, that I was proud to deliver, to invest almost \$408 million in faster and more reliable broadband for communities, households, and small businesses in 70 Georgia counties, and more than \$422 million to ensure Georgia communities in high-need areas have reliable and safe drinking water and wastewater systems. These are the exact type of investments, which rely on careful planning and budgeting, for which Congress intended these funds to be used. Rescinding the funds now would throw uncertainty into this process for future use of federal investment dollars, possibly chilling the further use of funds for all recipients at every level of government.

As Congress finalizes the Fiscal Year 2022 Omnibus appropriations package, I strongly oppose any cuts in the CSLFRF, which would jeopardize Georgia's ability to foster a strong, dynamic, transformational recovery from this unprecedented pandemic. I, therefore, urge you to strike Section 1306(d) from the Omnibus appropriations package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. Warnock" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Reverend Raphael Warnock
United States Senator