

CONGRESSMAN

Jimmy Panetta

PROUDLY REPRESENTING THE 20TH DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Dear Community Member,

As we continue to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, I remain committed to seeking and securing funding for the resources necessary to protect the lives and preserve the livelihoods of the people on the central coast of California. During this fight, our government continues to employ a strategy that is federally funded, state mandated, and locally executed. Thank you for doing your part at the local level by avoiding large crowds, staying-at-home as much as possible, practicing physical distancing, and wearing a mask. As our state and local leaders provide the necessary resources to respond to this crisis on the ground, I am proud to be a part of a United States Congress that continues to take decisive action by crafting and passing bipartisan legislation for the necessary funding to fight this pandemic and support all communities.

Fighting For Federal Funding With Major Congressional Legislation

In addition to several major bipartisan relief funding bills, including the \$2.2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, I worked on and recently voted for the [Heroes Act](#). That bill includes nearly \$1 trillion in direct funding for state and local governments to continue their fight on the frontlines by paying the healthcare workers, police, fire, transportation, EMS, teachers, and other vital workers who keep us safe. The Heroes Act also will establish Heroes' Fund to ensure that essential workers, like farmworkers, receive hazard pay and funding for child care. The Heroes Act extends federal unemployment payments, delivers a second round of direct payments to families, and provides critical supports for renters and homeowners. Based on the recent outbreaks of COVID-19 throughout our nation, we need more testing and tracing capabilities. The Heroes Act provides \$75 billion for testing, tracing, and treatment that our communities need to see and defeat this disease. This critical legislation is now being negotiated in the Senate, and I hope to vote on the final version when I go back to Washington, D.C. at the end of July.



[*Congressman Panetta debates the passage of the Heroes Act on the floor of the House of Representatives*](#)

Fighting For Federal Funding With Individual Congressional Legislation

Although Congress passed major coronavirus funding relief bills, we still need more to fight this disease and deliver public health and other critical services to our communities. That is why I authored and introduced legislation to protect our lives and livelihoods on the Central Coast, including:

- [The Immediate COVID-19 Testing Procurement Act](#) to require the President to fully mobilize the Defense Production Act (DPA) to direct emergency production, procurement, and distribution of supplies needed to increase testing for COVID-19
- [The Health Force and Resiliency Force Act](#) to recruit, train, and employ contract tracers to expand our public health workforce to combat the virus and strengthen America's longer-term public health response
- [The Coronavirus County Relief and Stability Act](#) to address the lack of COVID-19 relief funding for small and midsize counties
- [The Revolving Loan Fund Flexibility Act](#) to provide localities greater flexibility in using federal economic development funds delivered during the pandemic to revitalize our communities as the crisis recedes so that they can continue to grow and thrive
- [The Safe Reopening Tax Credit Act](#) to offset expenses related to preventing the spread of the virus, from plexiglass to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- [The RESTAURANTS Act](#) to cover essential expenses to help make up for lost revenues during this crisis, and provide relief to the workers who make our restaurant industry such a success
- [The Keeping the Lights On Act](#) to help small businesses afford their rent, mortgage, and utility costs
- [The JOBS Credit Act](#) to help businesses retain employees by expanding the employee retention tax credit

Fighting For Small Businesses With The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) provides forgivable loans through the Small Business Administration (SBA) to small businesses under 500 employees to cover operating costs and pay employees during COVID-19. The SBA will forgive the portion of the loans spent on payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities, provided businesses to keep their employees on their payroll. Small businesses, 501(c)(3) non-profits, veterans organizations, independent contractors, and the self-employed are all eligible for Paycheck Protection Program loans. Also, the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) under the CARES Act provides small businesses with opportunity for \$10,000 advance grants within three days of applying for a disaster loan.

The [Paycheck Protection Program Extension Act](#) significantly expanded the PPP by attempting to ensure that every qualified small business will have access to the critical assistance they need to retain their workforce and cover basic operating costs for the full duration of the unprecedented coronavirus pandemic. This legislation created an extension mechanism so that small businesses can extend their PPP loans, as the eight weeks of payroll provided by the PPP was not enough, and would provide additional funding to ensure that it does not run out of funds.

Many businesses, unfortunately, waited weeks for their grants, and the SBA is limiting these grants to \$1,000 per employee. Fortunately, the PPP Extension Act provides for \$50 billion

in EIDL disaster loans and \$10 billion in EIDL disaster grants up to \$10,000. That legislation assists the SBA in providing applicants with the full advance grants so that their small businesses can continue to sufficiently operate during this pandemic.

Based on our work in Congress to create and expand the PPP, over 6,500 PPP loans for over \$800 million have been disbursed to small businesses throughout the Central Coast. That means that the Congressionally established program helped save over 82,000 jobs in our district. My office has helped hundreds of Central Coast small businesses, including businesses owners, non-profits, the self-employed, and independent contractors, with these SBA loans. Please know that I will continue to help small business owners with PPP loans, Economic Injury Disaster Loans, and any other issues and questions about federal loans during this pandemic.

Please be aware that the current deadline to apply for a PPP loan is August 8.

For assistance on the SBA, PPP, and EIDL or for help in finding a lender, please [click here](#), the following links for information in [English](#) or in [Spanish](#), or call my office.

Fighting For Housing Relief

I supported and voted for the passage of the [Emergency Housing Protections and Relief Act](#) in the House of Representatives. This bill would help protect Americans from foreclosures, evictions, and unsafe housing conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The legislation would create a moratorium on evictions until next March and provide financial assistance to renters and homeowners. I also co-introduced the [Opportunity Starts at Home Act](#) to provide permanent, supportive services for people at-risk of experiencing homelessness.

For assistance with housing, please click on the following links for information in [English](#) or in [Spanish](#) or call my office.

Fighting For Increased Food Assistance

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequities in our country and threatened the health of community members on the Central Coast. Currently across the nation, nearly four in ten Black and Hispanic households with children are struggling to feed their families. I am working with my colleagues to [expand CalFresh](#) during this critical time, and have introduced the [Emergency Ensuring Access to SNAP \(EATS\) Act](#) to ensure that college students can use CalFresh even as their schools are closed or as they are remote-learning. [I also introduced the SNAP CARRY Act](#) to allow people to use their CalFresh benefits to purchase low-cost prepared meals from restaurants. This legislation really is a common-sense strategy to provide more options to food insecure individuals while simultaneously helping our food service and agriculture industries.

For assistance with local food banks and nutrition assistance programs, please click on the following links for information in [English](#) or in [Spanish](#) or call my office.



Congressman Panetta volunteering at food distribution centers across the Central Coast during the pandemic, from Soledad to Seaside and from the Boardwalk in Santa Cruz to a farmworker distribution center in the Pajaro Valley

Fighting For Our Schools

Our nation's education and child care sector has been particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. My colleagues and I secured strong education funding in the CARES Act, including \$1.5 billion for K-12 education in California and \$750 million for Head Start program for children in low-income families. We also secured additional funding in the Heroes Act, including \$7 billion for Child Care Development Block Grant program to help states cover child care assistance for the essential workforce, or for activities like cleaning and sanitation of child care centers. Moreover, the Heroes Act would provide funding to states, which fund our local school districts, including \$21.5 billion for the state and local governments in California in 2020 and \$26 billion in 2021.

Congress recently passed H.R. 2, [the Moving Forward Act](#), which includes critical funding to help schools reopen when they are ready. H.R. 2 provides \$100 billion grant funding to rebuild our schools, and for 2020 these dollars will be used to aid in safely reopening public schools in line with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) public health guidelines such as for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

Additionally, [I continue to support legislation to fight for child care funding](#) to provide immediate pandemic relief and sustained long-term recovery. Even with such funding, our schools will need guidance on how best to reopen. That's why this week I along with my California Congressional colleagues wrote to State Superintendent Tony Thurmond and Department of Public Health Director Sonia Angell encouraging oversight of school

reopenings and asking that the state provide guidance and technical assistance for schools that need help to safely reopen.

Fighting Against The Administration's Order To Remove International Students

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement recently released new regulations that international students taking classes online for the fall semester due to COVID-19 would have to transfer to a school with in-person classes or leave the country. I adamantly am against the administration's decision to remove people who are legally allowed to be here to study here. This decision is harsh, heedless, and hurts our nation's colleges, our economy, and, ultimately, our country and its values.

That is why [I immediately authored a letter that was signed and supported by 136 of my colleagues in Congress](#) and sent to the Department of Homeland Security demanding that the administration reverse its decision. I firmly believe that international students, especially during this pandemic, should be allowed to continue their education in the United States, so that they can also continue to contribute to the diversity and dynamism of our nation.

Fighting For Farmworkers

As we have long known on the Central Coast and as recently highlighted by this national emergency, farmworkers are essential to our food security. They show up to work every day and ensure the continuity of our domestic food supply. However, the working and living conditions of many farmworkers and their family members make them uniquely susceptible to COVID-19. Since they are at a greater risk of contracting this disease, which puts their health and our food supply at risk, we must provide farmworkers with adequate protections.

That is why early on in this pandemic, [I authored a letter that was signed and supported by 72 of my colleagues in Congress](#) calling on House leadership to provide or direct the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide funds to protect farmworkers and their families. I was also asked by the [Congressional Hispanic Caucus](#) to join them in pressuring Congressional leadership to include protections and financial assistance for farmworkers in future legislation to slow the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

Additionally, as a member of the House Budget Committee, I was part of a [hearing](#) on how COVID-19 is exacerbating the health and wealth inequities in our country. I spoke with the experts about how we can reduce these disparities for the Latinx community and farmworkers on the Central Coast. I will continue to fight for the safety of farmworkers and their families as they continue to provide our nation with food security.



[Congressman Panetta speaks during a Budget Hearing about fighting inequities in our communities](#)

Fighting For Agriculture

I recently participated in a [hearing](#) on the House Budget Committee to discuss the federal role in research and development to get through and recover from this pandemic. As the U.S. Representative of the Salad Bowl of the World, I used the opportunity to elevate the importance of federal investments in agricultural research and innovation in order to combat hunger and promote food security.



[Congressman Panetta participates in a Budget Hearing on research and development investments in agriculture](#)

I fought and secured the expansion of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) to include additional specialty crops. This program, funded in part by the CARES Act, provides vital financial assistance to producers of agricultural commodities who have suffered a five-percent-or-greater price decline or who had losses due to market supply chain disruptions due to COVID-19 and face additional significant marketing costs.

Additionally, farmers and ranchers [now can apply](#) for grants and low-interest, long-term loans through the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (EIDL). The SBA is accepting EIDL applications from agricultural businesses who are newly eligible for funding.

For assistance with or to determine eligibility or apply for EIDL, [please click here](#), visit my website, or call my office.

Fighting For Firefighters

As we enter into wildfire season, which has become longer and more intense, the danger posed to our federal wildland firefighters continues to grow. During the pandemic, firefighters will continue to risk their lives for the safety of our communities. This year, on top of managing higher-than-normal fire potential in multiple regions of the country, our firefighters face a new set of challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[I authored a letter and led my colleagues](#) in calling on the White House Coronavirus Task Force to ensure firefighters have access to both PPE and COVID-19 tests. My letter also requests that the Task Force work closely with relevant federal agencies to develop a detailed national strategy to prepare for potential wildfire-induced mass evacuations. Our nation's firefighters need action now so that they can do their jobs and keep our communities safe through the fire season and beyond.

Fighting For Seniors And Nursing Homes

While the persistent shortage of testing kits and delayed reporting and disclosure of COVID-19 outbreaks in nursing homes continue to obscure the full magnitude of this crisis, recent tragedies have made it painfully clear that our nursing homes are in dire need of additional federal support and guidance. That is why [I introduced legislation](#) to provide immediate support to nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities across the country experiencing outbreaks of COVID-19 cases. [I also led my colleagues in pushing the Administration](#) for greater federal resources and guidance to support nursing homes and long-term care facilities.

I participated in a Ways and Means Health Subcommittee [hearing](#) to discuss the COVID-19 crisis in nursing homes and how we can improve conditions for residents and staff. I asked the expert witnesses how to better incentivize staffing, increase testing, and reduce patient harm in nursing homes across our country.



[Congressman Panetta participates in a hearing on improving care in nursing homes during COVID-19](#)

Tax Day:

The IRS extended tax deadline of July 15 is fast approaching. By July 15, federal taxes must be filed and paid. For assistance with filing taxes, please visit the [IRS website](#) or if you have any questions, please call my office.

Continuing to Fight For You

As the U.S. representative for the people of the Central Coast, please know that I continue to fight this pandemic by continuing to serve you. For frequent updates on my work during this public health crisis, please follow me on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). If you have any questions or concerns that I or my staff can help you with, please call my Congressional offices in Salinas at 831-424-2229, Santa Cruz at 831-429-1976, or Washington, D.C. at 202-225-2861 or contact me through my [website](#). Please reach out at any time, and thank you for wearing a mask, staying home when sick, washing your hands, and practicing physical distancing. Please do your part during this pandemic, and I will continue to do mine by fighting for you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jimmy Panetta', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jimmy Panetta
United States Representative
20th Congressional District, California