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June 30, 2020

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor, State of Maryland
State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Peter Franchot
Comptroller, State of Maryland
Goldstein Treasury Building
80 Calvert Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Nancy K. Kopp
Treasurer, State of Maryland
Goldstein Treasury Building
80 Calvert Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Members of the Board of Public Works:

The coronavirus pandemic not only threatens the lives of millions of Americans but has resulted in significant economic hardship for Maryland businesses and families. This historic and sudden drop in economic activity put additional pressure on state and local budgets across the country as tax revenues plummet and costs skyrocket. At the same time, states must continue to combat COVID-19 and provide vital services and resources to those impacted by the virus.

I understand the immense pressure the Board of Public Works faces as you work to balance our state's budget in the middle of a public health crisis and economic contraction. This is why I led an effort alongside 61 of our fellow elected Maryland officials calling on Congressional leadership to provide the additional funding state and local governments desperately need. While tough times call for tough measures, eleventh hour negotiations driven by artificial deadlines will only serve to worsen our

economic security, hinder our recovery and hurt the very workers who have served on the front lines during this pandemic.

As you consider the \$672 million dollars in budget cuts proposed by Governor Hogan to address Maryland's budget shortfall, I urge you to oppose cuts that would exacerbate existing staffing shortages or lead to a reduction in wages and benefits for State employees, many of whom are currently covered by collective bargaining agreements.

It would be ill-advised to cut essential services and initiate more layoffs that will inevitably worsen the unemployment situation in Maryland without fully understanding the scope of this crisis. We can't fill a hole until we know the size. State government will not be able to determine its final revenue collections for the current fiscal year until later this summer due to the extended deadlines for filing sales and income tax payments that were included in the CARES Act. Additionally, \$540 billion in federal relief for state and local governments has been included in the House-passed HEROES Act. We hope to see that relief move forward as part of any final compromise, and it would doubtless help Maryland meet its obligations. Therefore, taking precipitous action to enact permanent state budget cuts, at this time of widespread economic uncertainty, might make a bad situation for our economy and our workers even worse. I urge you to delay any actions to reduce state workers' salaries and benefits for the time being and certainly until we have a fuller understanding of Congress' support for state and local governments.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of Maryland. I stand ready to work with you to advocate for federal assistance and for policies that will help our state and communities weather this difficult time.

Sincerely,



David Trone
Member of Congress