



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**GOVERNORS URGE IMMEDIATE FUNDING FOR AMERICORPS  
IN SUPPLEMENTAL BILL**

**Letter of Bipartisan Support Signed by 43 Governors, Issued Today by  
Governor Mitt Romney (MA-R) and Governor Edward G. Rendell (PA-D)**

July 21, 2003 – Today, in another show of bipartisan support for supplemental FY03 funding for AmeriCorps, 43 Governors – representing 81% of the nation’s population – issued a letter to Congress and the President. The letter sent to President Bush, and to Senate Majority Leader Frist, Senate Minority Leader Daschle, House Speaker Hastert and House Minority Leader Pelosi, follows closely on the heels of a similar initiative by 155 Mayors representing all 50 states. Echoing the Governors’ message, 224 House Members – representing a majority and bipartisan support – have joined the effort led by Representatives Harold Ford (TN-D) and Tom Osborne (NE-R), whose letter urged the President to restore AmeriCorps positions.

The Governors’ letter, whose lead signers are Governor Romney and Governor Rendell, has been signed by 24 Democrats and 19 Republicans, including Governor George Pataki (NY-R), Governor Jennifer Granholm (MI-D), Governor Bob Taft (OH-R), Governor Sonny Perdue (GA-R), Governor Bob Holden (MO-D), and Governor Jeb Bush (FL-R). The letter reads, in part, “Without an emergency appropriation, the dramatic decrease in AmeriCorps positions now being proposed could seriously affect communities and individuals who rely on AmeriCorps members for help. It is also likely to damage, if not destroy, the infrastructure of strong programs, which do not have the resources to sustain a significant budget cut, even if only for one year. Organizations that have been built over a decade cannot be eliminated this year and rebuilt the next.” Complete text of letter with accompanying names of signatories follows this release.

Mayor Menino of Boston and Mayor Murphy of San Diego led the Mayors’ effort on behalf of all the urban programs that benefit from AmeriCorps. Mayor Bloomberg of New York, Mayor Daley of Chicago and Mayor Hahn of Los Angeles are among the bipartisan group of Mayors who signed letters calling for supplemental funding for AmeriCorps.

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On June 26, Rep. Ford and Osborne wrote to President Bush urging him to include funding for AmeriCorps in his supplemental appropriations request. The Ford-Osborne letter gained the signatures of 164 bipartisan members. With the Representatives planning a press conference for tomorrow (July 22), a total of 224 Members of Congress have expressed support for the Ford-Osborne letter or written their own letters on behalf of AmeriCorps funding.

Since mid-June when dramatic and unprecedented AmeriCorps funding cuts were announced, there has been an outpouring of support to prevent the closing and cutting hundreds of programs across the country. The list of elected officials and business leaders who have come forward for immediate, emergency funding includes **79 Senators, 224 members of the House of Representatives, 155 Mayors, 186 College and University Presidents, 245 business and philanthropic leaders**, and more than **1,180 community-based programs** that meet vital needs with AmeriCorps members. In addition, **64 editorials** have been published in newspapers across America, in big cities to small towns, attesting to the impact and value of AmeriCorps.

The future of national service in America is entwined with the fate of the emergency funding bill. If the funding is not secured now, hundreds of programs will shrink or close their doors, and most will be unable to rebuild, even if additional funding is available next year. It will simply be too late.

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