

Senator Lamar Alexander
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Alexander:

As leaders of organizations serving communities across Tennessee, we are writing to urge you to include the funding and provisions in the CORPS Act in the HEALS Act.

Since the outbreak of the coronavirus, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members in our state have acted quickly and creatively to address gaps in services and persistent inequities that have only been exacerbated by COVID-19. AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members have delivered meals, conducted wellness checks, expanded access to health screenings, set up temporary isolation sites, organized blood drives, and provided virtual teaching, tutoring and mentoring to K-12 public school students. National service is providing critical support to communities in COVID-19 response and recovery; however, the federal funding currently available is not enough to help address core weaknesses in education, the economy and public health exposed by this pandemic.

We were pleased to see the introduction of the bipartisan CORPS Act last month by Senators Roger Wicker and Chris Coons, and we urge you to include the funding and provisions from that legislation in the next COVID relief package. The CORPS Act invests in the strong and capable national service infrastructure that can respond to specific local needs. Expanding AmeriCorps and strengthening Senior Corps will help communities with food distribution, supporting students, ensuring that vulnerable individuals continue to receive their medications, and supporting public health needs. It also will give young people experience, skills, a living stipend and post-service education scholarship at a time when employment opportunities are scarce. Finally, it will prioritize expanding programs in rural and high poverty communities.

On behalf of those we serve, we urge you to support the CORPS Act and expand AmeriCorps and Senior Corps so we can tap the talent and energy of national service members at this critical time.

Sincerely,

Catherine Cushinberry, Executive Director, City Year Memphis

Lise Bender, Executive Director, Girls Inc. of Hamblen County

Regina Whitfield, Foster Grandparent manager, Knox CAC Office on Aging- Senior Corps

Brenna Kelly, Corps Director, Southeast Conservation Corps - Conservation Legacy

Crystal Carter, Director of Impact, United Way East Tennessee Highlands

Ashley Abraham, Executive Director, United Way of Highway 55

Judy Fenton, Executive Director, United Way of Loudon County

Mary Graham, President, United Ways of Tennessee

Jim Snell, Executive Director, Volunteer Tennessee