

Senator Bob Menendez

Update regarding COVID-19

Greetings,

Below, please find a synopsis of Senator Menendez's latest efforts to support our state and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you are getting questions on federal benefits available to individuals and institutions in response to COVID-19, don't hesitate to direct constituents to our online guides for [state, county, and municipal administrations](#), [small business owners](#), [individuals and families](#), [homeowners and renters](#), [veterans](#), [hospitals and health care workers](#), [seniors](#), and on issues like [paid leave](#), [unemployment](#), [education](#), and [banking and tax relief](#).

If you can't find answers there, please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions you might have.

Fighting for Quick Access to Needed Resources

- As a senior member of the Senate Banking Committee and ranking member of the subcommittee on housing, he [announced](#) that he will introduce legislation to protect families from a potential housing, foreclosure and eviction crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic fallout with the creation of a new \$75 billion Housing Assistance Fund to assist households struggling to make ends meet. Although New Jersey's foreclosure rate has dropped as the economy has recovered from the Great Recession and Superstorm Sandy, it remains highest in the nation.
- This week, he [called](#) on U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Small Business Administrator Jovita Carranza to immediately provide lenders and borrowers assistance with the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), including clear, updated guidance for administering the PPP and reinforcing Small Business Administration's (SBA) portals and processing systems.
- He then [called](#) on the Treasury Department and the Small Business Administration to allow payroll processing companies to disburse the CARES Act small businesses loans to reduce complications and expedite salaries to workers.
- He and Sen. Booker [pressed](#) the Trump Administration to take additional actions to ensure workers receive unemployment insurance as quickly as possible.
- He [announced](#) a combined \$30,746,886 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support 24 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) located across the state from Cape May and Salem to Sussex and Warren counties. FQHCs are trusted providers for many in lower-income communities who need access to health care services.
- He [urged](#) the Trump Administration to immediately distribute critical funding from the \$100 billion designated as part of the CARES Act to hospitals, nursing homes, hospice

and other essential community health care providers for protective equipment, preparation, and surge capacity necessary to manage the spread of COVID-19.

- Following the first tranche of that funding, he [led](#) our entire congressional delegation in calling on the Trump administration to begin immediately allocating more support provided under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act for the Garden State's frontline hospitals and health care providers.
- He and Congressman Pascrell led the entire New Jersey congressional delegation in [urging the Trump Administration](#) to approve the state's request for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to fund an individualized housing program the state is seeking to create to provide quarantined sheltering for COVID-19 patients and frontline healthcare workers. Private living quarters, or non-congregate housing, rather than group settings, would allow individuals and families to safely isolate, thus reducing the exposure and spread of coronavirus, and take pressure off local hospitals.
- He and Sen. Booker also [urged](#) the Trump Administration to consider the steep barriers people experiencing homelessness will confront when trying to access the direct stimulus payments provided by the bipartisan CARES Act. We have called for the launch of a public awareness campaign to make sure that people experiencing homelessness are aware of their eligibility for these payments.
- He and Sen. Booker [announced](#) the awarding of \$26,135,661.28 in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) public assistance grants to the New Jersey State Police to aid first responders on the front lines of the COVID-19 fight.
- He and Sen. Booker [announced](#) that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) accepted their request to allow all New Jersey School Food Authorities to continue feeding students in the Summer Food Service Program through June 30.
- He [led](#) the New Jersey congressional delegation in calling for the U.S. Department of Education to expedite delivery of emergency COVID-19 funding for eligible colleges and universities that continue to suffer tremendous losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, reported that it stands to lose \$200 million "from fewer clinical revenues, enrollment decline and other fiscal challenges."

Urging Protections for At Risk Individuals

- As the highest-ranking Latino in Congress, he led 25 Senate colleagues in calling on the Trump Administration to do more to help minority communities that are seeing a disproportionately higher impact from the coronavirus pandemic. There is a critical need for demographic and racial data, and that any COVID-19 vaccine or drug treatment trials include women and racial minorities.
- He [called](#) on the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to utilize its emergency enforcement mechanism to require employers to develop and implement comprehensive plans to keep all essential workers who continue to perform their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic safe.
- He [pressed](#) Amazon on the treatment and safety of its front-line warehouse workers, and repeated their call for the tech giant to temporarily close any warehouses where a worker tests positive for COVID-19.
- He [urged](#) the Trump Administration to ensure that transit agencies can acquire personal protective equipment for their frontline workers during the COVID-19 outbreak.

- He [called](#) on WhatsApp parent company Facebook to stop the spread of misinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic on the instant messaging app, following widespread reports of dangerous, false information about the coronavirus circulating among WhatsApp's two billion users worldwide.
- He and several of his Senate colleagues [called](#) for the Financial Stability Oversight Council (FSOC) to take immediate action to avoid an impending crisis in the housing finance system due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 outbreak. In a letter to Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin, the Senators asked the FSOC to help avert instability in the broader mortgage market by providing temporary liquidity to mortgage servicers. Many servicers face an impending cash crunch as many American homeowners are forced to seek assistance on their mortgages due to economic damage and job loss caused by the health crisis.