

# New Jersey Senate

## SENATE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

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August 19, 2021

Honorable Phil Murphy  
Governor  
PO Box One  
Trenton, New Jersey, 08625

Honorable Paul A. Sarlo  
Co-Chairman, Joint Budget Oversight Committee  
496 Columbia Blvd., 1st Floor  
Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075

Honorable Eliana Pintor Marin  
Co-Chairman, Joint Budget Oversight Committee  
263 Lafayette St.  
First Floor  
Newark, New Jersey 07105

Dear Governor, Senator Sarlo, and Assemblywoman Pintor-Marin:

Today is the three-month anniversary of the State having received more than \$6.2 billion from the federal government to help alleviate suffering due to COVID 19 and to stimulate our economy which has the sixth worst unemployment rate in the country at 7.3%. However, we are informed by the Office of Legislative Services that all but \$316,000 of these funds remain sitting idle in two State accounts. Urgent action is needed now to get more than \$6.2 billion out the door to help people that otherwise has sat idle, so we are writing with urgent requests as follows:

- (1) The Governor should direct the departments to embrace a sense of urgency and put to use more than \$1 billion of funds already authorized to be spent in the Appropriations Act; and
- (2) The Joint Budget Committee should support a recent request by Senator Oroho and Assemblyman Wirths, in their capacity as members of the Joint Budget Oversight Committee, and meet as soon as possible to proactively provide guidance to the Governor on how best to put money to use, including authorizing funds to stabilize the unemployment insurance fund and avoid a recently announced \$252 million tax increase on all employers.

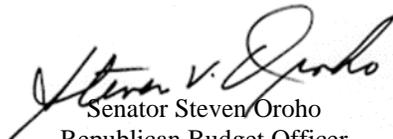
As you are aware, in April of this year, we proposed a broad outline of how to put federal funds to use found here: <https://www.senatenj.com/index.php/oroho/republican-budget-members-outline-responsible-plan-for-6-5-billion-of-arp-federal-relief-funds/52942>. We later proposed a similar use of funds though a formal budget resolution submitted to legislative leaders on June 7, found here <https://www.senatenj.com/index.php/oroho/senate-republicans->

[propose-budget-fixes-reforms-to-protect-nj-taxpayers/53764](https://www.nj.gov/treasury/budget/proposal/2017/propose-budget-fixes-reforms-to-protect-nj-taxpayers/53764).

We continue to believe that most of our proposed uses remain appropriate, though modifications would be needed to reflect uses already authorized in the Appropriations Act, and to address ideas that others may have suggested since the proposal was made.

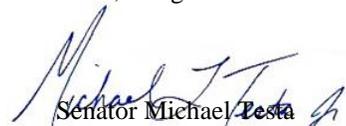
Ending bureaucratic hurdles to getting money to people who need help should be a no-brainer. It's an embarrassment that only \$316,000 out of more than \$6.2 billion has been put to use when the State received funds three months ago. JBOC providing pro-active guidance on desired uses of the funds should be a welcome approach so the Governor knows legislative priorities – including preventing increased taxes on suffering employers that will aggravate our sixth worst in the nation unemployment rate -- that must be addressed in his plan for JBOC consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Senator Steven Oroho  
Republican Budget Officer

  
Senator Declan O'Scanlon  
Member, Budget Committee

  
Senator Samuel Thompson  
Member, Budget Committee

  
Senator Michael Costa  
Member, Budget Committee

c: Members, Joint Budget Oversight Committee  
Thomas Koenig, Legislative Budget and Finance Officer  
Kevin Drennan, Senate Majority Executive Director  
Luke Wolff, Senate Majority Budget Director