



April 9, 2021

The Honorable Janet Yellen
 Secretary
 U.S. Department of the Treasury
 1500 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
 Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Yellen:

The Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Muscogee (Creek) Nations appreciate this opportunity to provide comments on the \$20 billion in Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery (CSFR) funding set aside for Tribal governments through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021.

Our Tribal governments and Tribally-owned businesses are the economic engines within our respective communities. Collectively, our Nations have an economic impact of more than \$9 billion. We directly employ 41,468 people and support an additional 25,000 jobs in rural areas with high unemployment and limited opportunities. Our Tribes account for approximately one-third of the country's Indigenous population.

The following table details our populations, employees, and economic impacts:

Tribe	Enrolled Citizens	Employees	Economic Impact
Cherokee	390,850	11,423	\$2.2 billion
Chickasaw	72,307	14,810	\$3.7 billion
Choctaw	232,707	11,062	\$2.5 billion
Muscogee (Creek)	90,794	4,173	\$866 million
Total	786,658	41,468	\$9.2 billion

As you contemplate how to allocate CSFR funding among Tribes, we request that you consider the following comments:

- **Treasury's allocation formula should balance self-certified citizen enrollment totals with employee totals.** These metrics have the closest link to increased governmental service costs and overall economic impact, and are the best ways of determining need.

- **Treasury should not limit Tribal sovereignty by issuing an overly prescriptive list of allowable or suggested uses.** Treasury should broadly read the statute in a way that promotes flexibility, and Tribal governments must have the ability to use this money as they deem appropriate. Any guidance around allowable or suggested expenditures must carry a clear disclaimer stating this guidance is not exclusive or comprehensive, nor does it limit potential uses. The only restrictions on the use of funds should be those Congress detailed in §602 (c)(2).
- **Treasury should not overburden Tribes with excessive guidance, FAQs, or reporting requirements.** The former administration's decision to issue rolling and often conflicting guidance and FAQ documents caused uncertainty and led to unnecessary audits. Treasury must issue clear initial guidance that remains in place for the duration of the covered period. Likewise, Treasury must issue clear reporting guidance and be straightforward with Tribes about reporting expectation.

We hold sovereignty in high regard, and we take our government-to-government responsibilities very seriously. We appreciate you doing the same through meaningful consultation, urgency, and transparency.

On behalf of the 786,658 citizens of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Muscogee (Creek) Nations, we thank you for your attention to the thoughts contained in this letter and applaud your diligent efforts around the allocations and distribution of this vital fund.

Sincerely,



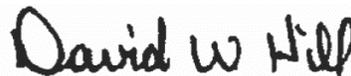
Chuck Hoskin Jr., Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation



Bill Anoatubby, Governor
The Chickasaw Nation



Gary Batton, Chief
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



David Hill, Principal Chief
Muscogee (Creek) Nation