Dear Governor Murphy,

As leaders of the Garden State’s major business associations, the New Jersey Business Coalition once again thanks you for your administration’s past use of federal funds to assist the business community and workers throughout the state. With another year of disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic having come to a close, and another year of uncertainty upon us, we write to request that the additional federal funds at your disposal be immediately put into the community to help support the industries which continue to be most significantly impacted.

Despite funds already being allocated and programs set up, unfortunately, employers statewide continue to struggle with hiring challenges, COVID-19 related work absences, revenue decline, and countless other issues stemming from the pandemic. While the federal dollars made available to the Garden State through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) have been appropriated to alleviate several of these concerns, the pace at which these funds have been moved into the hands of employers has lagged and must be hastened.

For example, in July, you signed the Child Care Revitalization Fund into law to support the state’s licensed childcare providers as they continue to serve state residents amidst incredible obstacles, and in October, you announced that $700 million in federal funds would go toward childcare. These funds would not only support these employers and their workforce but working mothers and families who rely on these services. As you are aware, the disruption to childcare availability is one of the reasons women dropped out of the labor force in record numbers last year. In order to quell some of the challenges facing this industry, as well as a workforce that relies on childcare access, these allocated funds must reach providers now.

Of course, this urgency is not limited to the childcare sector. Appropriations for vital industries remain unspent across the state. We recognize that this level of federal support is unprecedented, and that ensuring it is utilized correctly is important. However, we request that further actions be taken to speed the delivery of ARPA and other funds to their targeted recipients.

Additionally, with hundreds of thousands of New Jersey residents still out of work, and roughly as many jobs remaining unfilled, the Return and Earn program will be vital to regrowing our state’s workforce. With several recent surveys showing unemployed Americans’ interest in back-to-work bonuses, we are thankful that this program is meeting workers where they are and aiding businesses who are otherwise struggling to bring employees back off the sidelines. However, with only $500,000 spent out of a $10 million appropriation, these funds must flow more rapidly if our state is going to keep pace with the rest...
of the nation’s economic recovery. The members of the New Jersey Business Coalition are prepared to act as a resource for the state to help disseminate any information regarding allocations and how to access funding to our members to expedite this process.

New Jersey’s businesses remain at a critical juncture in our attempt to survive and recover from the COVID-19 crisis. To ensure that our recovery is at pace with the rest of the nation, it is important that allocations reach the business community as soon as possible. Your administration has placed a well-deserved focus on appropriating funds for sectors most in need of assistance. We ask you now to further help our state’s business community by releasing these funds as intended as expeditiously as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, Inc.
American Camp Association NY/NJ
American Institute of Architects
American Physical Therapy Association of New Jersey
Bernards Township Regional Chamber of Commerce
Big I New Jersey
Burlington County Regional Chamber of Commerce
Cape May County Chamber of Commerce
Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce
Chamber of Commerce of Greater Philadelphia
Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey
Chemistry Council of New Jersey
Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey
CrossState Credit Union Association
Downtown New Jersey
Early Childhood Education Advocates
Eastern Monmouth Area Chamber of Commerce
Employers Association of New Jersey
Fuel Merchants Associates of NJ
Garden State Initiative
Garden State Pharmacy Owners, Inc
Gloucester County Chamber of Commerce
Greater Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce
Greater NJ Motorcoach Association
Greater Toms River Chamber of Commerce
Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce
HealthCare Institute of New Jersey
Hoboken Chamber of Commerce
Home Health Services Association of New Jersey
Hudson County Chamber of Commerce
Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce
Jersey Shore Partnership
Ocean City Chamber of Commerce
Princeton Mercer Regional Chamber
Professional Insurance Agents of NJ (PIANJ)
Salem County Chamber of Commerce
Somerset County Business Partnership
Southern NJ Development Council
Southern Ocean County Chamber of Commerce
Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of NJ
Sussex County Chamber of Commerce
The American Planning Association - NJ Chapter
The Leadership Council of the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations (NAPEO)
The United Boatmen of N.J.
Union Township Chamber of Commerce
Washington Borough BID

CC: Senate President Sweeney
Assembly Speaker Coughlin
Senator Tom Kean Jr.
Assemblyman Jon Bramnick