



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Assistant Secretary for Legislative
and Intergovernmental Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20230

June 9, 2020

The Honorable Abby Finkenauer
Cannon House Office Building, 124
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Finkenauer:

Thank you for your letter requesting information on the Department of Commerce's (Department's) plan for distributing funds allocated under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

On May 7, the Department announced that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) is accepting applications for CARES Act Recovery Assistance funding opportunities. EDA will make CARES Act Recovery Assistance grants under the authority of its Economic Adjustment Assistance program, which offers the flexibility required to respond to the economic development needs and priorities of local and regional stakeholders. EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance investments will support a wide range of activities in communities across the country that are experiencing severe economic dislocations brought about by the coronavirus pandemic.

EDA is accepting applications for CARES Act Recovery Assistance grants on a rolling basis and strongly encourages interested applicants to contact EDA's Economic Development Representatives (EDR) for Iowa: Steve Castaner for Eastern Iowa and Alex Smith for Western Iowa. Their contact information is provided below, and they stand ready to provide additional information regarding program funds, eligibility, and the application process.

Listed below are links to information regarding EDA's CARES Act Recovery Assistance funding opportunities and contact information for the EDA Denver Regional Office Points of Contact.

Website Links and Application Information:

- EDA's CARES Act webpage: <https://www.eda.gov/coronavirus/>
- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=321695>
- Information about EDA's Economic Adjustment Assistance and Public Works programs: <https://www.eda.gov/programs/eda-programs/>

EDA Points of Contact for Iowa:

U.S. Economic Development Administration, Denver Regional Office
1244 Speer Blvd., Suite 431
Denver, CO 80204

Angela Martinez, Regional Director
Phone: 303-844-4715
E-mail: amartinez@eda.gov

Steve Castaner, EDR for **Eastern Iowa, Eastern and Central Missouri**
Phone: 573-590-1194
E-mail: scastaner@eda.gov

Alex Smith, EDR for **Western Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota**
Phone: 720-402-7686
E-mail: asmith1@eda.gov

The Minority Business Development Agency stands in full support of our minority communities and was provided \$10.0 million in CARES Act funding to distribute directly to its network of MBDA Business Centers and minority chambers of commerce. MBDA will distribute \$7.0 million to existing MBDA Business Centers across the United States so they can implement projects that will assist small and minority businesses in preventing, preparing for, and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although MBDA does not have a MBDA Business Center in the State of Iowa, minority-owned businesses may reach out to any business center for assistance. A list of MBDA Business Centers can be found on our website at www.mbda.gov/businesscenters.

The remaining \$3.0 million will be distributed to five national minority chambers of commerce who have the infrastructure to provide national coverage and the capacity to implement nationwide projects to reach large quantities of minority business enterprises. Assistance provided by the MBDA Business Centers and the national minority chambers of commerce will include technical assistance, training, education, and advisory services to small business enterprises (SBEs) and minority business enterprises (MBEs) as outlined in Sections 1107 and 1108 in the CARES Act. CARES Act funding for the MBDA Business Centers and national minority chambers of commerce will be awarded non-competitively and available for use no later than June 30, 2020.

The CARES Act provided the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Program with \$50 million “to assist manufacturers to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.”

On April 10, 2020, NIST launched the application process for distribution of the CARES Act funding to the MEP Centers by publishing a Request for Applications (RFA). Under the RFA, NIST will issue non-competitive awards to MEP Centers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico for COVID-19-related projects.

The Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS), the MEP Center in Iowa, is eligible for \$595,000 through the RFA. The amount of individual Center funding was determined by the number of manufacturers in the Center’s respective market. CIRAS has submitted its application, which has been reviewed and is in the process of being awarded.

The NIST MEP Emergency Assistance Program Request for Application is located at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=326218>.

Please be assured that the Department is committed to supporting the long-term recovery of communities across the nation that have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. If you have any additional questions, please call me at (202) 482-3663.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anthony Foti". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

Anthony Foti
Performing the Delegated Duties of the
Assistant Secretary for Legislative
and Intergovernmental Affairs