SUBJECT: Electric cooperatives members need Congress to act now!

Dear {INSERT NAME OF MEMBER OF CONGRESS},

Electricity is essential to keeping hospitals and clinics running, grocery stores open and millions of new home offices functioning. As a result, America’s electric cooperatives and the 1 in 8 Americans they serve are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Co-ops are diligently working to keep their employees and members safe while providing reliable and affordable electricity to some of the hardest hit local economies.

A surge in unemployment is expected to increase the financial strain on millions of Americans, resulting in an increase in unpaid utility bills. For electric cooperatives, that balance is projected to be **significant** over the next two years. That’s on top of substantial projected **losses** in operating revenues at electric co-ops like mine due to lower electricity sales in the wake of the pandemic.

My cooperative is a not-for-profit electric provider that has no shareholders. Because of this structure and the desire to keep energy costs as low as possible for people like me, many co-ops will face severe financial distress during the pandemic.

Congress must provide direct support to some of the nation’s most vulnerable communities.

**Time is of the essence. Policymakers should minimize the COVID-19 impact on our communities and electric cooperatives that serve us by providing a safety net. Specifically, Congress should:**

* Provide federal funds to support those that are not able to pay their bills
* Provide federal support to address operational shortfalls for electric cooperatives.
* Allow electric cooperatives to refinance federal loans without penalty and increase the amount of lending available to co-ops through USDA’s Guaranteed Underwriter Program.
* Direct FEMA to swiftly provide promised funding to co-ops that have restored their electric systems devastated by past disasters.

For more information on the threats electric cooperatives are facing during this pandemic, please read our letter to congressional leadership at [www.cooperative.com/stimulus-letter](http://www.cooperative.com/stimulus-letter)

**We need your help** toprotect our communities and the electric co-ops that serve them. Thank you and I look forward to hearing back from you on this urgent issue.