

Under proposed “Heroes Act,” greater New Bedford towns and cities would receive significant funding

Under the \$3 trillion dollar Heroes Act proposed by Rep. Lowey, Nita M. (D) and passed by the House of Representative on May 15, Americans would receive a helping hand from the government.

According to the wording of the bill, it “...responds to the COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on the economy, public health, state and local governments, individuals, and businesses.”

The specifics of the bill include nearly \$1 trillion alone for emergency supplemental appropriations to federal agencies and payments to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, direct payments of up to \$1,200 per individual, expands paid sick days, family and medical leave, unemployment compensation, nutrition and food assistance programs, housing assistance, expands the Paycheck Protection Program, establishes a fund to award grants for employers to provide pandemic premium pay for essential workers, tax credits and deductions, funding for COVID-19 testing and contact tracing, extends and expands the moratorium on certain evictions and foreclosures and requires employers to develop and implement infectious disease exposure control plans.

The “Heroes” aspect refers to the “...health care workers, police, fire, transportation, EMS, teachers and other vital workers who keep us safe and are in danger of losing their jobs.”

In addition, it modifies or expands a number of programs and

policies such as Medicare and Medicaid, health insurance, broadband service, immigration, student loans and financial aid, prisons, veterans benefits, federal elections, and pension and retirement plans.

The bill now rests with the Republican-controlled Senate who will vote on the bill sometime this week before it becomes law. The timing is crucial since the \$600 weekly supplement is set to expire on July 27th, which will have a dramatic and adverse effect on American households.

The Senate – many who have strong objections to certain aspects of the bill – would like to make some changes and adjustments before making the bill law. The \$3 trillion bill had some flaws as evidenced by the fact that it was passed by the Democratic House by only nine votes, with 14 Democrats voting “nay.”

Here are the estimated awards that specific towns and cities on the South Coast would receive in 2020, if passed:

- Acushnet: \$3,482,227;
- Dartmouth: \$11,291,565;
- Fairhaven: \$5,297,066;
- Fall River: \$140,122,701;
- Marion: \$1,692,731;
- Mattapoisett: \$2,099,539;
- New Bedford: \$132,036,398;
- Rochester: \$1,852,360;
- Westport: \$5,262,178;

The awards will continue into 2021 and would be as follows:

- Acushnet: \$1,741,113
- Dartmouth: \$5,645,783
- Fairhaven: \$2,648,533
- Fall River: \$70,061,350
- Marion: \$846,365
- Mattapoisett: \$1,049,770

- New Bedford: \$66,018,199
- Rochester: \$926,180
- Westport: \$2,631,089