



JACKSON COUNTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jackson County Executive proposes Rep. Joe Runions Act, \$10 million for COVID-19 response

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Jackson County Executive Frank White, Jr. released an emergency funding proposal today to combat the toll of COVID-19 on our community. The County Executive named his emergency funding proposal in honor of Missouri State Representative Joe Runions, who recently announced he was diagnosed with COVID-19.

The proposed funding is focused on providing essential support to the county's safety-net health care providers, Truman Medical Centers and the County's Health Department, as well as first responders and area in-home food delivery agencies. If approved by the County Legislature, the Runions Act would make millions of dollars immediately available for our frontline providers to purchase the equipment, tests and resources they need to keep our community safe.

"While my team's work on this plan started prior to hearing the unfortunate news about Rep. Runions' diagnosis, I thought it was fitting to honor him in this way as soon as I heard Joe's powerful call to action," said Jackson County Executive Frank White, Jr. "At a time of what I imagine must be great pain, fear and uncertainty for Joe and his family, he showed not only why he is such a great leader, but also what we are all capable of in these difficult times. From his hospital bed, still fighting this terrible disease, he called on us to step up and do everything we can to ensure that those we rely on to take care of us have the tools and resources they need to wage this war. That is exactly what the Runions Act does and that is exactly what I will continue to do for Joe and everyone else in our community."

"Without thinking twice, the dedicated providers at Truman Medical Centers jumped into gear to provide quality, compassionate care for our community," said Charlie Shields, President and CEO Truman Medical Centers. "We greatly appreciate this financial support from Jackson County. Together, TMC and Jackson County will heal, protect and save lives."

The Runions Act funding breakdown:

- Truman Medical Centers (TMC) – \$3 million

- To assist the hospital purchase needed medical equipment, such as ventilators or personal protective equipment (PPEs), increase their testing capacity, including drive-through testing and increasing their limited hospital bed capacity
- Jackson County Health Department – \$1 million
 - For testing kits, PPEs, additional staffing and other resources to assist in the testing and contract tracing of COVID-19
- Community Health Providers – \$1 million
 - Maximize TMC and the County Health Department’s reach and capacity by partnering with other community health care providers to increase testing, contact tracing and care for uninsured
- Temporary Sheltering and Increased Hospital Capacity – \$2 million
 - To provide temporary housing for individuals who do not have a safe location to stay during their quarantining, including but not limited to those who are: housing insecure, homeless, living with high-risk persons
 - Increase the number of beds available throughout the County, should the need outpace the currently supply
- Food Delivery – \$1.5 million
 - For area food agencies to provide meal delivery to those who are unable, or it is unsafe, for them to leave their homes. Agencies will be encouraged to hire unemployed service employees, or utilize restaurants negatively impacted by the virus, to assist in the preparation and delivery of food
- First Responder/Public Safety – \$1.5 million
 - For first responders, law enforcement and detention facilities to provide PPEs, additional equipment and staffing
 - Funds to be matched by local municipalities

The County Executive has had good conversation with members of the County Legislature about this proposal and will continue working with them to move this proposal forward. While this is the County Executive’s proposal, the ultimate decision on how much funding is made available and who receives it, will be up to the Legislature. County Executive White has requested that the Legislature hold an emergency meeting as soon as possible to consider the Rep. Joe Runions Act.

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