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Cities Turn to K Street for Help with Coronavirus.

CITIES TURN TO K STREET FOR HELP WITH CORONAVIRUS: The National League of Cities has hired its first Washington lobbying firm in more than a decade as the country's cities grapple with the coronavirus and the resulting budget shortfalls. Former Rep. Ed Royce (R-Calif.); Nadeam Elshami, a former chief of staff to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi; and nine others at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck will lobby on municipal finance and the coronavirus, among other issues, according to a disclosure filing.

— "This is an unprecedented time in our country and for cities economic needs," a National League of Cities spokesperson said in a statement. "The National League of Cities hired additional lobbying support to secure critically needed direct, flexible federal aid and support to help with our Cities Are Essential campaign. Local governments are calling for at least $500 billion in direct federal funding to protect families, municipal workers and America's economic future in response to the COVID-19 pandemic."

— The National League of Cities' decision to hire the lobbying firm came as a number of cities have turned to K Street for aid securing aid from the federal government. The city of Denver also hired Brownstein Hyatt in April to lobby on municipal finance "with a priority emphasis on COVID-19." The city of Savannah, Ga., hired Holland & Knight to lobby on the coronavirus last month; the city of Detroit hired former Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater and another Squire Patton Boggs lobbyist last month; the city of Coral Springs, Fla., hired Alcalde & Fay in April to lobby on the coronavirus; and the city of Vallejo, Calif., hired Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld.

— The National League of Cities also called on the Justice Department on Thursday to update its use of force guidelines for police officers. "While we appreciate the speed at which Congress and the Administration are moving to reform our nation's law enforcement, federal actions taken thus far — including the President's Executive Order signed this week — only scratch the surface of the critical reforms that our communities are desperately calling for," Clarence Anthony, the group's chief executive, said in a statement. But Brownstein Hyatt isn't lobbying on police reform for the National League of Cities, according to the group.

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