

Commissioner Turner Seek Funding For Coronavirus

Perry County Commissioner, Albert Turner, Jr. is seeking a way to access thousands of dollars from the State of Alabama for Coronavirus protection.

The State of Alabama received 1.8 Billion dollars in federal funds which must be spent before December 31, 2020 to deal with expenses related to the COVID-19. The State has set aside \$250 million dollars that will go to local governments for their expenses. It has been decided that the funding will be a reimbursement to the local governments for funds that they have or will spend to deal with COVID-19. Perry County is set to receive an allocation of up to \$525,000.00.

Commissioner Turner is concerned that many Blackbelt Counties can't assess the money for what is needed because of budget shortages. The Commissioner along with Senator Bobby Singleton and members of the Blackbelt Community Foundation called for a meeting of elected officials from the region to address the funding issue and to address accessing the State funding.

Senator Bobby Singleton who convened the meeting invited Kendra Key of HOPE Credit Union to serve as a facilitator to answer questions about the CARES ACT and what the money can be spent towards. During the meeting cash flow for counties was discussed. Commissioner Turner put the idea out for discussion for the Blackbelt Community Foundation to secure a loan from HOPE Credit Union to provide reimbursement grants to the 12 counties that the Foundation cover. The ideal was met with support from the Foundation Executive Director, Felecia L. Lucky. Mrs. Lucky said, "her Board would have to approve this action first." Kendra Key, Senior Vice President of Community and Economic Development for HOPE Credit Union said, "the Bank is prepared to loan the necessary money once the details are worked out."

Commissioner Turner in an effort to move quickly before the deadline for spending the Federal funds asked that each Official go to their Regional Commissions to seek reimbursable funding. Perry County is a member of Alabama Tombigbee Regional Commission. Commissioner Turner is a Board member of the Regional Commission, which is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, June 12. Turner has contacted the Executive Director, John Clyde Riggs to add the funding request on the upcoming meeting agenda.

Turner's plan for each county would be to receive a maximum of \$15,000.00 per request to purchase items to assist in the COVID-19 battle. Upon the counties receiving their reimbursement from the State they are to repay the Regional Commission. Upon repayment each county would then be eligible for another allocation until their allocation has been exhausted. These funds would be interest free to all participants.

Below is an archive photo of Commissioner Turner and Executive Director John Clyde Riggs along with Senator Singleton. Also shown is Kendra Key, Senior VP of Community and Economic Development for Hope Credit Union and Felecia Lucky, Executive Director of the Blackbelt Community Foundation.

