

January 13, 2021

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer:

We urgently write you to prioritize a proven solution to help overwhelmed front-line workers, jumpstart the economy and accelerate the pace of vaccinations: the passage of \$1 trillion in emergency funding for states, cities, towns and schools.

For the last 10 months, public service workers have stood courageously on the front lines of the fight against this pandemic, doing everything in their power to keep their communities safe and healthy. But as you know, the last COVID-19 relief legislation – despite your best efforts – failed to include desperately needed aid to support them.

Since early last year, nearly 1.4 million front-line public service workers – nurses, EMTs, sanitation workers, teachers, corrections officers, child care providers and others – have lost their jobs, devastating families and communities, as well as stymieing the nation's ability to beat the virus. African American workers who account for nearly one in five workers in the public sector have been especially hard hit. With a new president taking office next week and with Democrats assuming control of the U.S. Senate, this investment in states, counties, cities, towns and schools must be an early and top priority. We urge you to make it a reality within days of President-elect Biden's inauguration.

With state and local governments (in blue and red states alike) facing devastating revenue shortfalls, this funding is essential to maintaining the services that sustain our communities – public education, public health, public safety and much more. We need investment in these core functions to meet the logistical challenges of distributing the COVID-19 vaccine and end this pandemic once and for all. And this aid is required to breathe life back into an underperforming economy, which bled 140,000 jobs in December.

With respect to education, while the recently passed COVID-19 relief package included \$82 billion for education, that is only a portion of what is needed to sufficiently address the overwhelming effects of the pandemic on the safe operation of schools and what students need at this perilous time. That is why funds for states, counties, cities, towns and schools are so critical: they can address both the revenue losses due to the downturn in the economy and the additional costs needed to respond to the ongoing effects of the pandemic on schools and students.

We need \$1 trillion in funding – unrestricted funding, free of any poison pills, conditions or limitations that undermine working people and an increase in the federal Medicaid match (FMAP) – not just to get back to normal, but to build back better. We need this level of investment to restore our communities' ability to handle crises and respond to emergencies, capacity that has been vastly diminished since the austerity measures imposed during the Great Recession about a dozen years ago.

The obstruction last year from Senate leadership and the Trump administration flies in the face of public opinion and expert analysis. Economists of all ideological stripes have been clamoring for aid to states, cities, towns and schools, correctly arguing that it will have a multiplier effect that will trigger GDP growth. Local elected officials from both parties – who are responsible for somehow running functioning governments in this environment, without the ability to run deficits – are on board. And polls have consistently indicated overwhelming popular support from voters as well.

The mandate is clear. This federal assistance is good politics and good policy, a moral and an economic imperative. We look forward to working with you and the Biden-Harris administration to get this done right away.

Sincerely,

A. Philip Randolph Institute  
AFL-CIO  
African American Ministers in Action  
Alliance for Quality Education  
Alliance for Retired Americans  
American Federation of School Administrators  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Library Association (ALA)  
American School Counselor Association  
Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)  
Americans for Tax Fairness  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO  
Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents  
California After School Network  
Center for American Progress (CAP)  
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Coalition of Labor Union Women  
Communications Workers of America (CWA)  
Council of Administrators of Special Education  
Democratic Municipal Officials  
Democrats for Education Reform  
EDGE Consulting Partners  
Every Texan  
Feminist Majority Foundation  
For Our Future Action Fund  
Girls Inc.  
Health Care for America Now  
Health Care Voter

In the Public Interest

Indivisible

Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy

International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)

Mi Familia Vota

MomsRising

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Association of State and Territorial AIDS Directors

National Council of Negro Women (NCNW)

National Education Association (NEA)

National Organization for Women

National Superintendents Roundtable

Our Revolution

Pride at Work

Rebuild America's Schools

RootsAction.org

Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

State Innovation Exchange

Take on Wall Street

Tax March

Teach for America

The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)

The United States Conference of Mayors

Union Veterans Council, AFL-CIO

Voices for Progress