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February 5, 2021

House Committee on Oversight and Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Members of the House Oversight Committee:

On behalf of the more than 70,000 public service workers throughout Illinois represented by our union and the vital public services they provide, I am writing to request that you take immediate action on a comprehensive COVID relief package that includes unrestricted financial assistance to state and local governments.

Since the earliest days of this pandemic, AFSCME members at every level of government have been on the front lines, putting their own health and safety at risk to maintain vital services on which so many depend. State and local public health and emergency management employees have worked tirelessly to guide us through the challenges the coronavirus presents daily. Child protection workers have continued to go into homes to safeguard at-risk children. State and local law enforcement employees have maintained security in our prisons and safety in our communities. Caregivers are on the job round-the-clock to bathe, feed and assist individuals with the most severe developmental disabilities. Nurse aides have remained in service to our aged and ailing veterans despite massive COVID outbreaks in the state's veterans' homes. Human service, environmental protection, transportation employees—and many more—are all on the job to keep Illinois working.

Thousands of these frontline public service workers have contracted COVID, hundreds have had to be hospitalized, many are suffering prolonged aftereffects, and some have died.

It is without question that the State of Illinois and its units of local governments are experiencing immense fiscal pressures caused by COVID-19. The cost of coronavirus response, combined with revenue shortfalls and legal mandates for balanced budgets are causing state and local governments across the country to enact budget cuts, service reductions and further job loss. Illinois is no different.

In a survey conducted by the Illinois Municipal League, 87% of responding municipalities were anticipating revenue shortfalls caused by loss of sales tax, gaming tax and motor fuel tax revenues. Nearly half of those respondents listed reducing municipal services and personnel as a mechanism to bridge the gap in

revenue. That effectively means less governmental assistance when citizens need it most. And it also means layoffs of public employees at a time when unemployment is already at record high levels in our state.

Never has there been a time when the need for vital public services and the demands on government been greater than they are today. Local governmental units all across Illinois, in conjunction with state government, are now working at 'warp speed' to develop and implement a universal vaccination program that can put a halt to the spread of the coronavirus. Failure to include direct aid to state and local governments in any COVID relief legislation -- along with the flexibility necessary to ensure the maintenance of vital public services-- would leave state and local governments hampered in carrying forward this essential task, as well as all of the core services on which our communities depend. It would also, I would note, be counterproductive to stimulating an economic recovery.

AFSCME Council 31 appreciates your leadership in this time of national crisis. We respectfully request your support for President Biden's American Rescue Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roberta Lynch", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roberta Lynch
Executive Director



190 West Ostend St., #101
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February 4, 2021

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The Honorable Ben Cardin
The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
The Honorable Andy Harris
The Honorable Dutch Ruppersberger
The Honorable John Sarbanes
The Honorable Anthony Brown
The Honorable Steny Hoyer
The Honorable David Trone
The Honorable Kweisi Mufume
The Honorable Jamie Raskin
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Maryland Congressional Delegation:

AFSCME Maryland Council 3 represents more than 20,000 Maryland state and employees and 6,500 higher education employees. On their behalf and their communities, we **urge you to support the \$350 billion in urgently needed funding for states, local governments, tribes, and territories under consideration** in the House Committee on Oversight and Reform as part of H. Con. Res. 11.

Our members help vulnerable Marylanders buy healthy foods, pay energy bills, and obtain medical assistance. During the pandemic they have been a lifeline for Marylanders who have seen the pandemic wipe out their jobs and savings. Our members keep the Maryland highways safe. They are dealing with COVID-19 cases on their jobs in state and Baltimore city correctional facilities, the state psychiatric hospital centers, and in all of the campus housing of the University System of Maryland campuses. Our members guide bereaved families through the court probate process and registry of wills. They protect decedents last wishes, including the more than 7,000 Marylanders who have died from COVID-19. Our members at the Maryland Department of Labor have been working to process a record number of unemployment insurance claims filed during the COVID-19 pandemic to help families stay in their homes and their children fed. In short, the members of AFSCME Maryland Council 3 provide the vital services that make Maryland happen.

Our state lawmakers are in the process of making decisions on our state budget for FY2022. These budget numbers will shape the lives and futures of working families. As you well know, unlike the federal government our state cannot run a budget deficit. Enactment of \$350 billion in flexible state and local aid will determine whether and how our state tackles the health, economic, educational, and housing inequities laid bare and indeed worsened by the pandemic.

As you consider allocating \$350 billion in federal funds know it will allow Maryland to keep frontline workers employed, and maintain vital services, help our economy, and

Every AFSCME Maryland State and University contract guarantees a right to union representation.

An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.

800.492.1996

Find us: afscmemd.org

Like us: facebook.com/AFSCMEMD

Follow/Tweet us: [@afscmemaryland](https://twitter.com/afscmemaryland)

staff and resources to get vaccines distributed and stop the virus from spreading. Our members have stood courageously on the front lines of the fight against the pandemic, doing everything in their power to keep their communities safe, healthy, and strong. Despite risking their lives to save us, nationwide 1.4 million of these front-line public service workers have been laid off due to budget shortfalls caused by the pandemic. That is nearly double the total number of jobs lost during the entire Great Recession. But that's far from the whole story: thousands of Maryland public employees have been infected with COVID-19 while reporting to work to serve Marylanders, particularly Marylanders in crisis. All while already strained resources have been cut, understaffing skyrockets, and a "thanks" and a pat on the head are all we've received from the Hogan Administration. We can't beat this pandemic, distribute the vaccine, or get our state – and country – back to work when our frontline contributions are tokened and pushed off to the side.

I ask that as you deliberate you consider that Maryland public employees have continued to work the frontlines, and have had to fight tooth and nail to obtain personal protection equipment (PPE), get managers and supervisors to enforce (or even create) basic health and safety protocols and plans, and even acknowledge (let alone pay) hazardous duty deserves hazard pay. We've had thousands of members test positive for COVID-19, and we've gone to too many funerals in reverence and respect for the sisters and brothers we've lost. Enough is enough.

AFSCME Maryland Council 3 urges you to stand with those who've ensured Maryland moves forward when Congress considers the needed \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 bill with its \$350 billion in urgently needed help to states and localities. We ask that you oppose any amendment to cut or narrow the uses of these funds for **states, local governments, tribes, and territories**. As many of you have state legislative backgrounds yourself, you know full well what this means to ensuring Maryland state government continues to serve the people of Maryland. Your support for this legislation sends a clear message that this Congress will not ignore the harm and suffering caused by the pandemic, and you will stand with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Moran', followed by a long horizontal line.

Patrick Moran
President, AFSCME Maryland Council 3



Lee Saunders
President

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Secretary-Treasurer

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Olympia, WA

February 5, 2021

Committee on Oversight and Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.4 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I write to ask the House Committee on Oversight and Reform to include \$350 billion in unrestricted aid to states, counties, local governments, tribes, and territories in its final budget reconciliation language. The need could not be more urgent – for the health of our communities, the education of our children, and the economic livelihoods of small businesses and American families in every state in this country.

We are in the midst of a once in a century pandemic. On top of the untold pain and suffering families are experiencing as they lose loved ones to a deadly virus, we also find ourselves in the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

Through all of this, everyday heroes have stepped up to lend a helping hand to the struggling communities around them. After coming off a 12-hour shift, [nurses in New Mexico](#) – who like so many other nurses around the country have taken the place of family as the one to hold a dying COVID-19 patient's hand – recorded videos to encourage their community to mask up, get vaccinated, and beat the pandemic together. In Los Angeles, library workers scrambled to [develop online programming](#) to continue to serve infants, children, parents, and caregivers, when it was no longer safe to do so in person. When the pandemic struck in Hawaii, one public health safety inspector [purchased PPE with money out of his own pocket](#) to keep his co-workers safe as they kept everything from restaurants to swimming pools safe for the general public.

It is past time to act boldly and give our front-line workers a fighting chance to beat this pandemic and get our country back to work. Let's make sure our unemployment offices are adequately staffed so the extended UI from Congress gets to people in need quickly. Let's make sure social service workers have manageable caseloads as they work to keep our children safe. That our brave firefighters, police officers, EMTs, and other first responders aren't fired or furloughed due to budget cuts. That our [front-line workers can get the vaccines](#) they desperately need to be safe on the job. And that our schools can re-open safely and custodial staff will have the staffing and resources they need for frequent cleanings.

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

TEL (202) 429-1000 FAX (202) 429-1293 TDD (202) 659-0446 WEB www.afscme.org 1625 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-5687

These essential public services are the backbone of our communities. Good roads, sanitation and clean water are essential to the success of any small business; how can these businesses survive if these services are axed? Some have suggested that a key reason this pandemic is worse than it should have been is because public service jobs – including public health jobs – never returned to the levels they were at before the Great Recession; if we gut them even further, how can we prepare ourselves for the next crisis America faces? And how can we truly say we want to increase jobs as we lay off our front-line heroes? You cannot add jobs by subtracting them.

Nationwide, over 1.4 million of our front-line public service workers have already been laid off due to budget shortfalls caused by the pandemic. Custodian Bill Rosser was one of 139 support staff who lost their jobs as part of [three rounds of layoffs](#) at Ohio University. In other states, essential health care workers like Pat DeHart have been asked to take on contact tracing roles in [addition to their normal jobs](#) of immunizing school-aged children and adults. States, cities, counties, tribes, and territories are counting on Congress to help them bring people back to work and prevent additional layoffs and service cuts.

Substantial investment is urgently needed to help Americans that are suffering and to stimulate economic recovery. **I urge you to support the \$350 billion in urgently needed funding for states, local governments, tribes, and territories under consideration** in the House Committee on Oversight and Reform as part of H. Con. Res. 11. I also urge you to oppose any amendments that would lower or restrict this needed \$350 billion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bailey K. Childers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Bailey K. Childers
Director of Federal Government Affairs

BKC:cg



February 12, 2021

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
Chairwoman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Oversight and Reform
Washington, DC 20015

Dear Chairwoman Maloney:

On behalf of the 1.7 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I write in strong support of the \$350 billion in direct aid to state and local governments being considered in your committee today. This language is an integral part of President Joe Biden's bold, broad \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 rescue plan, which this country desperately needs, and it will provide help for struggling Americans across the nation.

Every person in America deserves the freedom to thrive, fueled by opportunity, justice and a voice in our democracy. That requires not only addressing the multiple crises affecting our country—COVID-19, the economic fallout and inequity, racial injustice, and threats to our democracy—but also creating the just and equitable conditions for economic and educational opportunity for all.

It is vital that the fiscal year 2021 budget reconciliation bill in the Oversight and Reform Committee includes \$350 billion to keep first responders, frontline health workers, educators and other providers of vital services safely on the job. Many states and localities have seen their revenues plummet as a result of the pandemic, even as costs have risen sharply to fight the virus and help millions of struggling people and businesses. State revenues are down some 7 percent compared with before the pandemic, while the need for state services has skyrocketed, with 1 in 3 adults struggling to meet household expenses. Meanwhile, many cities and counties have been hit even harder. The average city with falling revenues has seen collections drop by 21 percent, while costs have soared; counties face similar conditions.

Even after two emergency aid packages passed in the last Congress, state and local governments are facing hundreds of billions of dollars in shortfalls, as the cost of providing public services in a safe manner has increased. The pandemic has meant added costs for these governments as well as added healthcare costs. This bill is badly needed to give communities and families the chance to thrive after so many months, and years, of pain.

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

AFT Teachers
AFT PSRP
AFT Higher Education
AFT Public Employees
AFT Nurses and Health
Professionals

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Adam Urbanski
Debbie White, RN
Carl Williams



We also support provisions in the bill that provide emergency paid leave for civilian federal employees and postal workers. Allowing these employees to be eligible for up to 600 hours of leave until Sept. 30, 2021, when they are forced to quarantine themselves or care for a family member, is the right thing to do. We support this inclusion.

I commend you for your leadership in moving this important bill forward and look forward to working with you to get this and the other parts of the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan signed into law as soon as possible.

Finally, we strongly urge all committee members to reject any amendments that would undermine the delivery of the \$350 billion in critical aid to state and local governments.

Thank you for considering our views on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Randi Weingarten", with a stylized, flowing script.

Randi Weingarten
President

RW : emc opeiu #2 afl-cio



American Federation of State, County,
and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

info@afscme3299.org
afscme3299.org
510. 844. 1160

February 4, 2021

The Honorable Katie Porter
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Porter:

AFSCME Local 3299 is the University of California's (UC) largest employee union, representing more than 27,000 Service workers, Patient Care Technical workers, Skilled Craft workers, and more at UC's ten campuses, five medical centers, numerous clinics, research laboratories, and UC Hastings College of Law. **I urge you to support the \$350 billion in urgently needed funding for states, local governments, tribes, and territories under consideration** in the House Committee on Oversight and Reform as part of H. Con. Res. 11.

The UC system is the state's 3rd largest employer, and it has been reeling from staggering coronavirus costs. The UC was smacked with \$558 million in unanticipated costs in just the month of March of last year alone. From March through August of 2020 the financial toll on the UC system was roughly \$2.2 billion. Our state lawmakers are in the process of making decisions on our state budget for 2021-2022. The budget numbers will shape the lives and futures of working families. Unlike the federal government our state cannot run a budget deficit. Enactment of \$350 billion in flexible state and local aid will determine whether and how our state tackles the health, economic, educational, and housing inequities laid bare and indeed worsened by the pandemic.

As you consider allocating \$350 billion in federal funds know it will allow California to keep frontline workers employed, and maintain vital services, help our economy, and have the staff and resources to get vaccines distributed and stop the virus from spreading. Our members have stood courageously on the front lines of the fight against the pandemic, doing everything in their power to keep their communities safe, healthy, and strong. Despite risking their lives to save us, nationwide 1.4 million of these front-line public service workers have been laid off due to budget shortfalls caused by the pandemic. That is nearly double the total number of jobs lost during the entire Great Recession. We can't beat this pandemic, distribute the vaccine, or get our country back to work if we thank these everyday heroes with pink slips.

I ask that as you deliberate your vote you consider workers like Phil Fagan - a Psych Technician who is fortunately recovering from COVID-19 after contracting the virus while servicing his community. As a lifelong City of Irvine resident, Phil has spent the last ten years working at UC Irvine Medical Center as a patient care technician in the psychiatry department. With rise for need in mental health care services during the pandemic, Phil stepped up to be frontline hero to treat and care for patients and members of his community without fear. When Phil contracted the virus himself he counted on his coworkers and family to care for him with the same care and kindness with which he treats his patients. After a month since falling ill, Phil is recovering and is looking forward to return to work to continue to care for patients, however fear of budget cutbacks has put his ability to continue to support patients at risk.

UC'S LARGEST EMPLOYEE UNION

AFSCME Local 3299 urges you to stand with Phil Fagan and 27,000 of our members across California, when Congress considers the needed \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 bill with its \$350 billion in urgently needed help to states and localities. We ask that you oppose any amendment to cut or narrow the uses of these funds for **states, local governments, tribes, and territories**. Your support for this legislation sends a clear message that this Congress will not ignore the harm and suffering caused by the pandemic to and you will stand with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathryn Lybarger', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kathryn Lybarger
President, AFSCME 3299



AFSCME Local 1644

260 Peachtree Street, NW • Suite 2200 • Atlanta, GA 30303 • 404.472.0028

February 5, 2021

Honorable Jody Hice
U.S. House of Representatives
404 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Hice,

On behalf of the 1,100 members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 1644, I urge you to support a coronavirus relief package that is based on President Biden's American Rescue Plan to provide aid as soon as possible.

Georgia and our country are suffering from one of the worst health and economic catastrophes ever. There have been nearly 450,000 deaths and millions of Americans have lost their jobs or are under-employed due to the pandemic. In Georgia, there have been approximately 928,070 COVID cases and 13,800 resulting deaths. The U.S. economy lost more than 22 million jobs at the height of the pandemic last year! According to the Economic Policy Institute, 26.8 million workers—15.8% of the workforce—are being directly hurt by the coronavirus crisis. People are struggling to buy food and other necessities. There is also an escalating housing crisis and many people are struggling to pay rent or their mortgage.

We must act quickly and boldly to get our country back on track. AFSCME Local 1644 supports President Biden's \$1.9 trillion plan as a starting point for Congress to put together a robust economic recovery package. The plan includes \$600 billion to support public services, including \$350 billion in flexible aid to state and local governments, education funding, public transit funding, increased unemployment benefits, raising the minimum wage, direct cash payments, and eradicating the virus by providing funding for testing, contact tracing, vaccine distribution and PPE. Front-line workers like nurses, teachers, EMS, custodians, correctional officers, child care providers and others continued working throughout the pandemic keeping communities safe and healthy. Flexible, direct aid is now needed to avoid deep cuts in vital public services and more layoffs that we face due to a 2.5 billion budget shortfall.

Now is not the time to withhold or restrict needed spending. Substantial investment is urgently needed to help Americans that are suffering and to stimulate economic recovery.

Sincerely,

Humeta Embry, Executive Director
AFSCME Georgia Local 1644, AFL-CIO



AFSCME®

We Make America Happen

February 4, 2021

Danny Homan
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Jusie Baker
Executive Vice President

Paula Martinez
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Richard Frauenholz

District 7
Vice Presidents

Benedetta Culver
Feona Donald-Sullivan
Michelle Mason

Dear Members of the House Oversight Committee:

On behalf of the 40,000 people in Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas represented by American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 61, I urge you to support a coronavirus relief package that is based on President Biden's American Rescue Plan to provide aid as soon as possible.

Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas are suffering from one of the worst health and economic catastrophes ever. There have been nearly 450,000 deaths and millions of Americans have lost their jobs or are under-employed due to the pandemic. In these three states, more than 1.1 million COVID cases have resulted in 16,442 deaths. The U.S. economy lost more than 22 million jobs at the height of the pandemic last year, including 220,000 jobs across our territory. According to the Economic Policy Institute, 26.8 million workers—15.8% of the workforce—are being directly hurt by the coronavirus crisis. People are struggling to buy food and other necessities. There is also an escalating housing crisis and many people are struggling to pay rent or their mortgage.

Additionally, public services are under threat here in the Midwest. The impact of COVID-19 on state and local budgets is real. In Iowa, local communities are bearing the brunt of the pandemic's budgetary challenges, with Des Moines seeing a \$25 million cut to its budget, Iowa City seeing a reduction of \$5.2 million, and Ames forecasting a \$62 million drop in revenue for the next fiscal year from the current one. In Missouri, the state is looking at \$418 million less in revenue than the current fiscal year as they craft their state budget, and the City of St. Louis is anticipating a \$48 million loss in revenue in the current fiscal year on top of a \$21 million loss in revenue last year. In Kansas, legislators are looking at a decrease of \$152 million from last year's budget.

We must act quickly and boldly to get our country back on track. AFSCME Council 61 supports President Biden's \$1.9 trillion plan as a starting point for Congress to put together a robust economic recovery package. The plan includes \$600 billion to support public services, including \$350 billion in flexible aid to state and local governments, education funding, public transit funding, increased unemployment benefits, raising the minimum wage, direct cash payments, and eradicating the virus by providing funding for testing, contact tracing, vaccine distribution and PPE. Front-line workers like nurses, teachers, EMS, custodians, correctional officers, child-care providers and others continued working throughout the pandemic keeping communities safe and healthy. Flexible, direct aid is now needed to avoid deep cuts in vital public services and more layoffs.

Now is not the time to withhold or restrict needed spending. Substantial investment is urgently needed to help Americans that are suffering and to stimulate economic recovery.

Sincerely,

Danny Homan, President
AFSCME Council 61

Iowa Office 4320 N.W. 2nd Avenue Des Moines, Iowa 50313
Telephone (515) 246-1517 Toll Free (800) 372-6054 Fax (515) 244-6467 Website: <http://www.afscmecouncil61.org>

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President

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February 5, 2021

Honorable Brenda Lawrence
U.S. Representative 14th Congressional District
26700 Lahser Road Suite 330
Southfield, MI 48033

Dear Congresswoman Lawrence:

On behalf of Michigan AFSCME Council 25 and our nearly 50,000 Sisters and Brothers that keep Michigan communities, schools, and hospitals running, I am writing to emphasize the urgent need for the federal government to provide aid to our state and local governments.

Like states around the country, Michigan's state government has seen tax revenues plummet over the course of the past year. For the current fiscal year, Michigan's general fund and school aid fund revenues are down a combined \$1.2 billion relative to projections a year ago. For the next fiscal year, Michigan's general fund and school aid fund revenues are down a combined \$840 million relative to projections a year ago.

Meanwhile, the need for public expenditures to combat COVID-19 and jumpstart the economy has never been greater. Governor Whitmer's ambitious and much-needed Michigan COVID Recovery Plan aims to spend \$575 million in state funds to assist struggling small businesses, invest more in schools to help students recover from learning loss, and provide property tax relief and public assistance to struggling families. None of this will be possible if the federal government fails to provide substantial aid to state and local governments.

The consequences of failing to act would be dire. As Governor Whitmer has warned, inaction would lead to more people contracting and dying from COVID-19, schools staying closed for more months and students falling further behind, and more small businesses permanently shuttering their doors. All of these impacts have been, and will continue to be, disproportionately borne by Michiganders of color and by low-income families.

As a member of the House Oversight and Reform Committee, you play an instrumental role in shaping federal aid to states and local governments. It is imperative that Congress pass the full \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan that President Biden has proposed, and we ask you to strongly support it.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter, and please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

In solidarity,



Lawrence A. Roehrig
President
Michigan AFSCME Council 25

LAR:Imp



February 4, 2021

To Minnesota's U.S. Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of the 43,000 members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 5 and 13,500 members of AFSCME Council 65, we urge you to support a coronavirus relief package that is based on President Joe Biden's American Rescue Plan to provide aid as soon as possible.

Minnesota and our country are suffering from one of the worst health and economic catastrophes ever. There have been nearly 450,000 deaths and millions of Americans have lost their jobs or are under-employed due to the pandemic. In Minnesota, there have been over 463,766 COVID cases and 6,234 resulting deaths. The U.S. economy has lost more than 22 million jobs at the height of the pandemic last year, including nearly 8% of Minnesota's workforce. According to the [Economic Policy Institute](#), 26.8 million workers—15.8% of the workforce—are being directly hurt by the coronavirus crisis. People are struggling to buy food and other necessities. There is also an escalating housing crisis and many people are struggling to pay rent or their mortgage.

We must act quickly and boldly to get our country in a position to rebuild a new future rooted in the lived experiences of working families. AFSCME Council 5 and Council 65 supports President Biden's \$1.9 trillion plan as a starting point for Congress to put together a robust economic recovery package. The plan includes \$600 billion to support public services, including \$350 billion in flexible aid to state and local governments, education funding, public transit funding, increased unemployment benefits, raising the minimum wage, direct cash payments, and eradicating the virus by providing funding for testing, contact tracing, vaccine distribution and PPE. Front-line workers like nurses, general maintenance workers, correctional officers and security counselors, social workers, clerical workers and others continue working throughout the pandemic keeping communities safe and healthy. Flexible, direct aid is now needed to avoid deep cuts in vital public services and more layoffs that we face due to our state's \$1 billion budget deficit.

Now is not the time to withhold or restrict needed spending. Substantial investment is urgently needed to help Americans that are suffering and to stimulate economic recovery.

In solidarity,

Julie Bleyhl

Executive Director, AFSCME Council 5

Shannon Douvier

Executive Director, AFSCME Council 65

Cc: U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar

U.S. Senator Tina Smith

U.S. Representative Jim Hagedorn, 1st Congressional District

U.S. Representative Angie Craig, 2nd Congressional District

U.S. Representative Dean Phillips, 3rd Congressional District

U.S. Representative Betty McCollum, 4th Congressional District

U.S. Representative Ilhan Omar, 5th Congressional District

U.S. Representative Tom Emmer, 6th Congressional District

U.S. Representative Michelle Fischbach, 7th Congressional District

U.S. Representative Pete Stauber, 8th Congressional District

February 11, 2021

The Honorable Kweisi Mfume
U.S. House of Representatives
2263 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2007

Dear Congressman Mfume:

On behalf of the 3 million members of the National Education Association, who teach and support students in public schools and public colleges, and also include front-line workers providing other vital services, we urge you to include \$350 billion in aid to state, county, local, tribal, and territorial governments in final budget reconciliation language. Votes on this issue may be included in the NEA Report Card for the 117th Congress.

We are in the midst of a once in a century pandemic. On top of the untold pain and suffering families are experiencing as they lose loved ones to a deadly virus, we are also in the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Educators have risen to this moment and demonstrated the resilience, creativity, and teamwork that we strive to cultivate in our students. Educators and all public service workers have often risked their own health and that of their families to provide crucial services to keep our communities going.

However, the jobs of the very public service workers we depend on are in jeopardy. Nationwide, over 1.4 million of these workers, including educators, have already been laid off due to budget shortfalls caused by the pandemic. Additional layoffs would be disastrous, especially for the schools and neighborhoods that were struggling with too few resources even before the pandemic. The burden would largely be shouldered by already under-served Black and Brown communities.

States, cities, counties, tribes, and territories are counting on Congress to help them bring people back to work and prevent additional layoffs and service cuts. We urge you to support the \$350 billion in funding for states, local governments, tribes, and territories under consideration in the House Committee on Oversight and Reform as part of H. Con. Res. 11. We also ask you to oppose any amendments that would lower or restrict this desperately needed \$350 billion.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association

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February 4, 2021

Dear Representative Herrell:

On behalf of the 10,000 members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 18, I urge you to support a coronavirus relief package that is based on President Biden's American Rescue Plan to provide aid as soon as possible. On their behalf and the communities, we serve we urge you to support \$350 billion in urgently needed funding for states, local governments, tribes, and territories under consideration in the House Committee on Oversight and Reform as part of H. Con. Res. 11. New Mexico and our country are suffering from one of the worst health and economic catastrophes ever.

There have been nearly 450,000 deaths and millions of Americans have lost their jobs or are under-employed due to the pandemic. In New Mexico, there have been over 175,000 COVID cases and over 3,300 resulting deaths (see https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days). The U.S. economy lost more than 22 million jobs at the height of the pandemic last year, including 65,800 in New Mexico—a loss of 7.6% of jobs (https://www.bls.gov/web/laus/statewide_otm_oty_change.htm). According to the [Economic Policy Institute](#), 26.8 million workers—15.8% of the workforce—are being directly hurt by the coronavirus crisis. People are struggling to buy food and other necessities. There is also an escalating housing crisis and many people are struggling to pay rent or their mortgage.

We must act quickly and boldly to get our country back on track. AFSCME Council 18 supports President Biden's \$1.9 trillion plan as a starting point for Congress to put together a robust economic recovery package. The plan includes \$600 billion to support public services, including \$350 billion in flexible aid to state and local governments, education funding, public transit funding, increased unemployment benefits, raising the minimum wage, direct cash payments, and eradicating the virus by providing funding for testing, contact tracing, vaccine distribution and PPE. Front-line workers like nurses, teachers, EMS, custodians, correctional officers, child care providers and others continued working throughout the pandemic keeping communities safe and healthy.

Flexible, direct aid is now needed to avoid deep cuts in vital public services. Local governments like Santa Fe and Rio Rancho have already had to furlough workers, taking money out of New Mexicans' pockets and endangering any recovery. Agency budgets have been flat and fallen behind the increased demand for services. New Mexico, which is one of the most fiscally responsible states in America, has had to run through its 27% reserves. Even as responsible as New Mexico has been, from reserves to pension reform, the state has suffered greatly <https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/states-grappling-with-hit-to-tax-collections>.

Now is not the time to withhold or restrict needed spending. Substantial investment is urgently needed to help Americans that are suffering and to stimulate economic recovery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Derr'.

Connie Derr
Executive Director, AFSCME Council 18
AFSCME International Vice President, Southwest Region



CHRISTOPHER MABE
PRESIDENT
GERARD 'ROCKY' JOLLY
VICE PRESIDENT
KATHLEEN M. GERSPER
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Representative Jim Jordan
2056 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Feb. 5, 2021

Dear Representative Jordan:

On behalf of the 30,000 members of the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association/AFSCME Local 11, I urge you to support a coronavirus relief package that is based on President Biden's American Rescue Plan to provide aid as soon as possible.

Ohio and our country are suffering from one of the worst health and economic catastrophes ever. There have been nearly 450,000 deaths and millions of Americans have lost their jobs or are under-employed due to the pandemic. In Ohio, there have been over 900,000 COVID cases and more than 11,000 resulting deaths. The U.S. economy lost more than 22 million jobs at the height of the pandemic last year, including 350,000 in Ohio. According to the Economic Policy Institute, 26.8 million workers—15.8% of the workforce—are being directly hurt by the coronavirus crisis. People are struggling to buy food and other necessities. There is also an escalating housing crisis and many people are struggling to pay rent or their mortgage.

We must act quickly and boldly to get our country back on track. OCSEA/AFSCME Local 11 supports President Biden's \$1.9 trillion plan as a starting point for Congress to put together a robust economic recovery package. The plan includes \$600 billion to support public services, including \$350 billion in flexible aid to state and local governments, education funding, public transit funding, increased unemployment benefits, raising the minimum wage, direct cash payments, and eradicating the virus by providing funding for testing, contact tracing, vaccine distribution and PPE. Front-line workers like nurses, teachers, EMS, custodians, correctional officers, child care providers and others continued working throughout the pandemic keeping communities safe and healthy. Flexible, direct aid is now needed to avoid deep cuts in vital public services and more layoffs that we face due to a \$360 million dollar budget shortfall.

Ohio has had its share of challenges during the pandemic, including an outdated unemployment system that has caused big slow-downs in claims; prisons that are so short staffed prison employees must

work dangerous levels of overtime; and short staffing in the state and counties Departments of Health, which left the state flat-footed on its COVID response. To say nothing of the fact that we have tragically lost eight employees in the Ohio Depts. of Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services from COVID complications.

Now is not the time to withhold or restrict needed spending. Substantial investment is urgently needed to help Americans that are suffering and to stimulate economic recovery.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Mabe", with a stylized, flowing script.

Chris Mabe
President