



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

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PAUL SHEARON
President

MATTHEW S. BIGGS
Secretary-Treasurer

March 5, 2021

Dear Senator:

As the executive officers of the International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IFPTE) – a labor union that represents over 85,000 working people across the public sector, the private sector, and in federal government – we urge you to pass the Senate Substitute Amendment to the American Rescue Plan Act through the budget reconciliation process. This \$1.9 trillion relief package includes IFPTE members' most urgent priorities and necessary provisions that previous COVID relief legislation has failed to include.

Working families in every congressional district of our nation are looking to Congress to help provide economic relief and support. The ongoing national public health emergency and economic crisis are further exacerbated by existing inequities in community health care, national and regional infrastructure deficits, and state and local government budgets and services that have yet to recover from the last economic crisis. Thankfully, the American Rescue Plan Act provides working families and their communities with urgently needed federal relief.

By passing the American Rescue Plan Act, Congress will ensure that state, county, and municipal governments have the fiscal support they need to continue to combat the pandemic and economic fallout and are well-positioned for the economic recovery. With \$350 billion for state and local governments, \$170 billion for public education, \$30.5 billion for public transit, and \$75 billion for housing and community development, this bill preserves public sector jobs, maintains important publicly provided services, and ensures that governments have the resources they need to respond to the public health needs and economic distress facing our communities.

This legislation also provides relief for workers in the aviation manufacturing industry by including the bipartisan Aviation Manufacturing Jobs Protection Act. This provision provides accountable federal support for aerospace employers and protects jobs in this high-skill and export-oriented industry. This program will be critical for ensuring that the U.S. aerospace supply chain can help drive the post-COVID economic recovery and help our nation's global economic competitiveness in the years ahead.

IFPTE applauds the Senate for maintaining the language that allows 15 weeks of paid leave for federal employees who are required to miss work for COVID-related matters. This bill also allows workers to continue their families' health insurance coverage with a 100% federal COBRA subsidy and replace lost income through pandemic unemployment insurance and the \$400/week emergency unemployment compensation. Provisions in this bill fund a coordinated national strategy for vaccination and contract tracing, expand food security and nutrition programs, lift low-income families out of poverty through a child tax credit, and provide \$1,400 in direct financial assistance to individuals, including those in mixed status households. This bill also extends the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to unions, which have been excluded from the nonprofit employers that are able to apply for PPP loans.

Therefore, we urge you to vote in support of the American Rescue Plan Act and to vote against any weakening amendments. Finally, we are disappointed that the Senate did not find a way to include a \$15 federal minimum wage increase, a long overdue adjustment that would have increased pay for 40 million workers, given low-income families more spending power, and generated economic growth throughout the country.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either of us or contact IFPTE legislative representative Faraz Khan at 301-275-6038.

Sincerely,

Paul Shearon
President

Matthew Biggs
Secretary-Treasurer/Legislative Director

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