



February 26, 2021

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.7 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I urge you to put partisan politics aside and come together to meet this moment—as COVID-19 is ravaging our families, states and schools—and solve the monumental challenges before us, by supporting H.R. 1319, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The AFT believes that every person in America deserves the freedom to thrive, fueled by opportunity, justice and a voice in our democracy. First and foremost, that requires addressing the coronavirus pandemic. This is a moment to demonstrate that government can be a powerful force for helping people, breathing new life into communities and creating a more just society.

This bill will help accomplish this and bring us together to beat the pandemic. The bill prioritizes helping struggling Americans, getting vaccines in arms, allowing children to safely go back to school so their parents can get back to work, reviving the economy, and preserving critical jobs and services in our states, cities and towns.

We need Congress to take bold, decisive action, to beat the coronavirus and get America back to work. This bill does just that by:

- Putting an additional \$1,400 in people's pockets to help stimulate the economy AND help working families through the public health and economic crises we face.
- Providing hundreds of billions of dollars for COVID-19 testing, tracing and vaccine distribution.
- Saving the essential jobs of firefighters, teachers and EMTs, and critical services like water testing, sanitation and public health, by providing \$350 billion in long-delayed but urgently needed aid to our cash-strapped cities, states, towns and tribes.
- Helping schools and colleges reopen safely with \$170 billion to help put in place the necessary guardrails, infrastructure improvements and services to address the academic, social, emotional and mental health needs of the nation's students.
- Providing and extending \$400 supplements to people receiving unemployment, and providing critical assistance for child care and child care providers.

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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

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

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- Boosting the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and expanding paid leave so that more people can stay home when they are sick or need to take care of sick loved ones.

The American Rescue Plan Act has our full support, and we emphatically urge a yes vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randi Weingarten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Randi Weingarten  
President

RW : emc opeiu #2 afl-cio