



March 16, 2020

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they educate and support, we urge you to vote YES on the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (H.R. 6201), a good initial step in addressing this public health emergency. Votes associated with this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 116th Congress.

The novel coronavirus has changed our way of life and drastically affected many working families. From being infected with the virus, to worries about the health and well-being of themselves and their loved ones, to uncertainty about jobs and finances and general anxiety about the future: This pandemic has already taken an incredible toll on our nation. Given that the worst is yet to come, we ask you to pass H.R. 6201 quickly while considering additional measures that will ease working families' burden, restore peace of mind, and grant a sense of stability.

We ask, however, that local education agencies (LEAs) be able to access tax credits associated with their expenditures on paid leave. The current bill expressly excludes LEAs (and other state and local agencies) from receiving these credits while granting them to private schools and private colleges. This disparate treatment will be costly and sends the wrong message at a time when the need for unity is clear.

Despite the tax credit issue, NEA members strongly support the Families First Coronavirus Response Act because it includes several measures that will help working families.

Provides Free Testing

- Free coronavirus testing for **everyone** who needs a test, including the uninsured.

Provides Paid Emergency Sick Leave

- Two weeks' sick leave for those who are:
 - Sick or quarantined
 - Caring for others who are sick
 - Caring for a child whose school or childcare provider is unavailable due to the coronavirus

Provides Paid Family and Medical Leave

- Three months' paid family and medical leave available to those who have been on the job for at least 30 days to:
 - Adhere to a requirement or recommendation to quarantine
 - Care for an at-risk family member

- Care for a child if the child's school or other care facility has been closed, or the provider is unavailable due to the coronavirus.

Strengthens Food Security Initiatives

- Provides \$500 million for nutritious foods for low-income pregnant women or mothers with young children, should the women lose their jobs due to the covid-19 emergency
- Enables the Department of Agriculture to approve state plans for providing emergency SNAP assistance to families with children who would have received free or reduced-price school meals if their schools were open
- Enables Agriculture to issue nationwide school meal waivers, eliminating paperwork for states and increasing schools' flexibility
- Allows child and adult care centers to operate as feeding sites and waive all meal pattern requirements if covid-19 disrupts the food supply
- Removes all work and work training requirements for SNAP during the coronavirus crisis

Medicaid

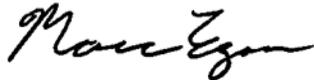
- Increases federal funds for Medicaid by roughly \$36 billion

Enhanced Unemployment Compensation

- Provides \$1 billion in 2020 for emergency grants to states for activities related to processing and paying unemployment insurance benefits

Again, we thank you for taking swift action to assist working families and urge you to vote YES on H.R. 6201. At the same time, we ask you to take additional steps to help our nation weather the pandemic and provide a safety net for our most vulnerable families and communities.

Sincerely,



Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association