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February 10, 2021

U.S. House of Representatives  
Ways and Means Committee  
Washington, DC 20015

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 3 million members of the National Education Association, who teach and support students in public schools and on public college campuses across the nation, we urge you to support the provisions regarding unemployment benefits, paid leave, and pensions that are part of the COVID-19 relief package. Votes on this issue may be included in the NEA Report Card for the 117th Congress.

The pandemic has taken a tremendous toll on families, and the protections in the relief package will help those who have either lost jobs, or had their hours or wages reduced, regain the security they have lost. These protections will also help shore up multiemployer pension plans. We support provisions to:

- Extend Unemployment Insurance provisions through August 29, and increase the weekly supplement from \$300 to \$400;
- Provide a \$1,400 “survival” check, up to an income of \$75,000 a year, and extend this payment to child and adult dependents, as well as all members of a household with Social Security Numbers, including the children of parents holding ITINs;
- Extend paid leave tax credits through September 30;
- Provide fully refundable \$3,000 Child Tax Credits, capped at \$4,000 for one child or \$8,000 for two or more;
- Provide \$3.55 billion for child care assistance;
- Provide premium assistance of 85 percent to continue COBRA coverage through September 30, although we ask that this subsidy be raised to 100 percent;
- Increase Affordable Care Act premium tax credits;
- Extend through December 31 the employee retention tax credit, provided to eligible employers who retained employees during the pandemic; and
- Include the Butch Lewis Emergency Pension Plan Relief Act of 2021 to stabilize the pensions of more than 1 million Americans, often frontline workers, who participate in multiemployer plans that are rapidly approaching insolvency.

The many crises stemming from COVID-19 demand responses that are bold and visionary, not timid or modest. We ask you to vote YES on the provisions within the relief package that will assist working families in rebuilding their lives and regaining financial security.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan  
Director of Government Relations  
National Education Association