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February 3, 2021

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 3.1 million members of the National Education Association, who teach, mentor, and support students in communities across America, we urge you to swiftly pass S.Con.Res.5 to begin the process of providing desperately needed, substantial relief in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Votes associated with this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 117th Congress.

NEA members have been in constant contact with students and families throughout this crisis, witnessing firsthand their desperation, fear, and anxiety. Half measures and timidity will only prolong our nation's immense suffering. Instead, we need a response that meets the tremendous pain of this moment. S.Con.Res.5, because it includes the core elements of President Biden's American Rescue Plan, represents a bold step forward.

NEA's priorities for S.Con.Res.5 include:

- \$165 billion in dedicated funding to help public K-12 school buildings and public college and university campuses reopen safely, and \$5 billion for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund;
- \$350 billion in aid to state, local, and tribal governments;
- Emergency funds for the E-Rate program, administered by the Federal Communications Commission, to help schools procure and distribute Wi-Fi hotspots, connected devices and other technology;
- \$22.7 billion for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, pandemic EBT, and other food assistance programs; and
- Broadening and strengthening paid emergency sick leave for all workers, including educators.

We ask that you vote *for* amendments that would enhance the impact of S.Con.Res.5. For your consideration, we **STRONGLY** urge you to support any amendment that:

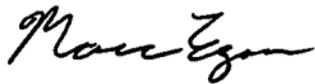
- Provides additional aid to public schools, campuses, or state, local, and tribal governments, in order to avoid additional layoffs of the educators and other public-service workers we rely on in this crisis.
- Strengthens health care affordability and access, workers' rights, and racial, social, and economic justice.
- Strengthens federal food assistance programs.
- Enacts broad-based debt cancellation for student loan borrowers as a means of reinvigorating the economy and narrowing the racial wealth gap.

We ask you to vote *against* amendments that would weaken the ability of S.Con.Res.5 to provide the aid Americans are depending on. For your consideration, we STRONGLY urge you to oppose any amendment that:

- Cuts funding for public schools, campuses, or state, local, and tribal governments.
- Redirects public dollars to private schools via vouchers, tax credits, education savings accounts, 529 plans, or similar schemes.
- Includes budget caps or fiscal restrictions that limit the ability to invest in the nation's priorities going forward.
- Cuts funding or support for health care, including Medicaid and Medicare, or retirement security, or that weakens workers' rights.
- Weakens federal food assistance programs.

As you debate this legislation, keep in mind that workers are continuing to lose jobs, children are continuing to go hungry, and public services are continuing to be stretched beyond capacity. There is no time to waste. For the good of our nation, we need a robust and immediate congressional response to COVID-19. We urge you to vote YES on S.Con.Res.5.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Egan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association