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September 8, 2021

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

The 3 million members of the National Education Association, who teach and support students in 14,000 communities across America, urge you to vote YES on S.Con.Res.14 to advance key elements of the administration's Build Back Better agenda on jobs, education, and families, and continue to strengthen the economy, **and to vote YES on the Rule** to advance the budget resolution, John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to the floor. Votes associated with these issues may be included in the NEA Report Card for the 117th Congress.

The Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Resolution introduced by Senate Budget Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders (I-VT) will allow Congress to move forward in providing critical support for working families and students, especially during a time when our nation is continuing to deal with the effects and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NEA strongly supports key investments called for in the resolution and urges you to go further in some areas in the subsequent reconciliation bill, including:

### **MODERNIZING SCHOOL FACILITIES**

We believe the reconciliation bill that follows the budget resolution should include the Reopen and Rebuild America's Schools Act (S. 96/H.R. 604), which will create a \$100-billion grant program and \$30-billion tax credit bond program targeting high-poverty schools in which facilities pose health and safety risks to students and staff.

### **MAKING HIGHER EDUCATION MORE AFFORDABLE AND INVESTING IN EDUCATOR PREPARATION**

We ask that the legislation provide two years of free community college for all, including Dreamers and part-time students; increase Pell grants and expand students' access to them; and support Grow Your Own programs and other efforts to increase and diversify the educator workforce.

### **SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

We support expanding the Child Tax Credit to continue reducing childhood poverty; providing universal pre-kindergarten to every 3- and 4-year-old; and upgrading child care facilities and increasing the supply of child care where it is most needed.

### **PROVIDING FREE SCHOOL MEALS TO ALL**

We ask you to broaden community eligibility to provide free school meals to additional students, and expand electronic benefits transfer options and provide school meals during summer and when schools are closed. We believe the reconciliation bill that follows should include healthy school meals for all students, permanently.

**EXPANDING STUDENT ACCESS TO DIGITAL LEARNING**

We call on you to make additional investment in the E-Rate Program through inclusion of the SUCCESS Act, which will connect students to the internet who currently have no access at home.

**PROTECTING WORKERS AND FAMILIES**

We support modifying the Family and Medical Leave Act to include education support professionals; guaranteeing up to 12 weeks of paid leave; expanding eligibility for unemployment benefits and ensuring that going forward funding can support adequate benefits during a national crisis; and including the Protect the Right to Organize Act.

**ENSURING A PATHWAY TO CITIZENSHIP**

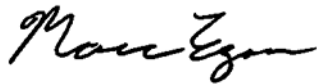
We ask that you make meaningful immigration reforms that provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers/Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, farm workers, and essential workers for whom America is home.

**INVESTING IN AMERICA THROUGH TAX FAIRNESS**

Please ensure tax fairness by making corporations and the wealthiest Americans pay their share of taxes.

Congress has a unique opportunity to build on the progress made by the American Rescue Plan. For the good of our nation, please vote YES on S.Con.Res.14 and on the Rule to begin the process of making crucial investments in students and the health and well-being of working families.

Sincerely,



Marc Egan  
Director of Government Relations  
National Education Association