

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4607

July 29, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
S-221, The United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
S-230, The United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Leader McConnell,

As you work to craft legislation that will improve our country's physical and human infrastructure, we write to strongly urge you to include a \$100 billion investment in workforce development as proposed in the President's American Jobs Plan.

Seventeen months into the pandemic and uneven economic recovery, nearly 10 million Americans are still officially unemployed, including [more than 3 million people who have lost their jobs permanently, and 4 million long-term unemployed individuals](#). Another 6.5 million people have dropped out of the workforce completely but want to work.

As Congress considers investments that [nonpartisan analysis has projected will create millions of jobs in the coming years](#), we need to ensure that we invest in programs that help unemployed individuals pursue the jobs with better wages that we are creating.

If we do not provide sufficient support, we risk leaving these Americans behind in the economy's reopening. For many of them—particularly workers of color and low-wage workers—these impacts could be permanent unless we invest in them now.

At the same time, businesses across industries need more workers so they can safely reopen and meet growing demand. Prior to the pandemic, there was a mismatch between skills that workers were able to access and skills that businesses needed, and the health and economic crisis only exacerbated this challenge.

Congressional investments in workforce training and support are essential to position workers for the new, skilled jobs that are going to be part of the post-pandemic economy.

Too often, transportation bills and other economic recovery legislation have not included investments in worker training alongside other job-creation measures. This means that the workers most in need of those skilled jobs never got the training they needed to jump-start new careers and support themselves and their communities.

The framework in the American Jobs Plan ends that trend.

These investments are overwhelmingly popular with workers across the country. In fact, [89% of Americans](#) want any infrastructure package approved by Congress to include significant new investments in workforce training. This would help ensure that all Americans—including those most

impacted by the pandemic—can build the skills they need for the jobs that will be created by federal investments in roads, bridges, transportation, clean water, and clean energy.

Making the \$100 billion investment in people that the American Jobs Plan calls for means living up to our responsibility to American workers. It means recognizing that their skills and successes are as critical as bricks or mortar or steel. It means ensuring that our efforts support an inclusive economic recovery.

The workers and businesses most impacted by the pandemic—women, people of color, immigrants, and small businesses that drive local economies—need Congress to invest in the training and support that are essential components of any job creation efforts. We urge you to invest at the scope and scale that live up to the commitment we made to workers and businesses across our country and to include \$100 billion of investment in workforce development in any infrastructure or economic recovery package.

Sincerely,



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Ben Ray Luján
United States Senator

CC:

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor,
and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor,
and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Chair
Senate Committee on the Budget
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Budget
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