



January 31, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
Chairman
Budget Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Yarmuth
Chairman
Budget Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Appropriations Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Health, Education, Labor and
Pensions Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Chairman
Education and Labor Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Chairman Sanders, Chairman Yarmuth, Chairman Leahy, Chair DeLauro, Chair Murray and Chairman Scott:

On behalf of America Forward, I am writing to offer our support for the Build Back Better Act (H.R. 5376), particularly several critical education, childcare, workforce, and national service provisions included in the House-passed legislation. We remain encouraged by the Build Back Better Plan because it would direct substantial and much-needed resources to address long-standing disparities in America's education, workforce systems and the generational impacts of poverty, along with our nation's childcare, nutrition, and national service programs. H.R. 5376 will move forward on these important investments for our nation's families, workers, students, educators, and communities.

Specifically, we support the following provisions that:

- Strengthen our childcare system and secure universal pre-K for three- and four-year-olds;

- Provide strong supports for postsecondary students by increasing the value of Pell Grants, investing in minority-serving institutions, and ensuring DREAMers are eligible for federal student aid;
- Support postsecondary evidence-based student services by investing in a transformative College Retention and Completion Grant program;
- Bolster and improve critical job training programs, including funds for national service, apprenticeship programs, YouthBuild, and industry and sector partnerships programs that support evidence-based training; and
- Expand our most effective child nutrition programs.

As Congress continues its work on the Build Back Better package, we encourage you to retain these important provisions in the final bill. Additionally, we look forward to working with you and other congressional leaders on strengthening several of the bills' provisions that are important to our Coalition and the communities they serve, including:

- Ensuring that certain grant funds under the workforce programs be used on evidence-based, rigorously proven approaches, including a set aside that aligns with the outcomes-driven structure of the bipartisan Expanding Pathways for Employment Act; and
- Funding and establishing the Climate Civilian Corps (CCC), which includes a flagship AmeriCorps program that reimagines national service, expands its mission to address longstanding needs in conservation, disaster response and climate resiliency, and creates 300,000 AmeriCorps positions, putting young Americans on a pathway to good-paying climate jobs.

We cannot ignore the pressing needs of students, workers, families, and nonprofits today, nor can we afford to lose sight of the support that will continue to be necessary in the coming months and years. We appreciate your ongoing work to advance the Build Back Better Act.

Thank you in advance for considering our views.

Sincerely,



Deborah Smolover
Executive Director, America Forward
Managing Partner, New Profit

About America Forward

The America Forward Coalition is made up of more than 100 innovative, high-impact organizations from across the country that are working to solve some of our most pressing challenges in education, workforce development, and poverty alleviation. America Forward unites social innovators with policymakers to advance a public policy agenda that advances equity, fosters innovation, rewards results, catalyzes cross-sector partnerships, and transforms local impact into national change.