

Tuesday, July 14, 2020

Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer:

As Congress prepares to return from recess and negotiate over an upcoming coronavirus relief package, we write with the utmost urgency and deep concern about the ongoing public health and economic crisis brought on by COVID-19.

With the country experiencing unprecedented death and on the brink of a surge in poverty, the inexplicable refusal by the President and Senate Republicans to help families and communities must come to an end. The number of confirmed cases from COVID-19 has now crossed 3 million with more than 130,000 confirmed deaths, while tens of millions of people have lost their jobs and are at risk of losing their health care. Meanwhile the modest lifelines in the CARES Act in the form of supplemental pandemic unemployment insurance and other measures are set to expire.

Republican leaders' obstruction is either deeply cynical, foolish, or immoral. We will not let it stand.

As Democrats enter into these negotiations, we urge you to follow the lead of the already-passed HEROES Act where Congress heard loud and clear from the millions who demanded relief.

Measures in the HEROES Act legislation are vital to getting through this pandemic because they ensure working people have support to feed their families while following public health guidelines. Communities of color and undocumented people in particular are bearing the brunt of the public health and economic crisis on account of longstanding racist, anti-immigrant and anti-worker policies.

In particular we urge you to ensure these three essential components in the HEROES Act are included in any final legislation:

- One trillion dollars in state and local aid to safely reopen schools, avoid mass layoffs, and maintain essential services with at least \$100 billion for public education and a significant increase in funding for child care.
- An Essential Workers Bill of Rights that covers all people required to work in physical proximity to other people during the crisis, with robust provisions like hazard pay, paid sick leave, child care, OSHA protections, access to PPE and more.
- Modest but essential immigrant inclusion provisions and protections to ensure millions of taxpayers and families, as well as people in mixed status households, aren't left out of health or economic relief.

These measures are essential for our economy to recover, avoid mass layoffs and protect millions of workers. They must be retained in final relief legislation.

People of all walks of life know we need responses to the pandemic that put people first, meet the scale of the crisis, and protect workers, families and the economy. Together with our millions of members, we are committed to working for improvements, and making sure the HEROES Act is passed by the Senate.

Signed:

American Federation of Teachers
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Care in Action
Color of Change
Community Change Action
Center for Popular Democracy Action
Demos Action
Greenpeace USA
Indivisible
MoveOn
SEIU
United We Dream Action