



February 3, 2021

Dear Wisconsin Congressional Delegation:

We write to you as organizations that represent communities and constituents across Wisconsin, joined together to urge Congress to take immediate action and pass President Biden's American Rescue Plan. The coronavirus pandemic has brought unspeakable devastation to families across the United States. The country is quickly approaching 450,000 lives lost to the virus as [nearly 250,000](#) new cases are reported each day. Hospitals are overwhelmed, [with roughly 130,000](#) patients seeking treatment for the virus and roughly 24,000 requiring intensive care. Vaccine distribution is in disarray. This plan will deliver much-needed relief to families, provide support for struggling state and local governments, jumpstart a nationwide vaccination program, and rebuild our communities.

The deteriorating health situation has been accompanied by a national economic disaster of historic proportions. The unfettered spread of the virus put millions of Americans, including thousands of Wisconsinites, out of work, and an economic recovery has sputtered amid worsening caseloads and has deepened stark racial disparities, with communities of color suffering the worst of the ongoing emergency.

President Biden's American Rescue Plan includes several key provisions that are carefully designed to tackle the immensity of this moment:

Robust Investment In Vaccines, Diagnostics, and Response

- Invests **\$20 billion in a national vaccination program** in partnership with states, localities and Tribes. **Sets up community vaccination sites and deploys mobile vaccination units to remote or hard-to-reach areas.**
- Provides **\$50 billion for the expansion of testing**, including funds for rapid tests, expanded lab capacity, and to help schools and localities implement testing
- Funds **100,000 public health workers** for vaccine outreach and contact tracing, and **\$30 billion in the Disaster Relief Fund** to strengthen supplies of protective gear.

Supporting State And Local Communities

- Provides **\$440 billion in critical support** for struggling communities, to support small businesses, educators, transit workers, and first responders, including **\$350 billion in emergency funding for state and local governments** to ensure they can keep front line public workers on the job and paid, and distribute the vaccine, scale up testing, reopen schools, and maintain vital services.

Protecting American Workers And Families

- Increases direct payments to families **by an additional \$1,400** to help hard-hit households cover expenses and stimulate the economy. Extends and expands unemployment insurance by providing a **\$400 per week federal supplement**. Raises the **minimum wage to \$15 per hour**, and provides **emergency paid leave**.
- **Subsidizes COBRA** through the end of September, invests **\$4 billion to help expand access to mental health services**, and allocates **\$20 billion to help meet the health care needs of America's veterans**.
- Extends eviction and foreclosure moratoriums, provides **an additional \$25 billion in assistance to support low-income renters**. Allocates **\$5 billion** to help states and localities secure housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. **Extends the 15 percent SNAP benefit increase, and invests \$3 billion in WIC** to help women, infants and children access high-quality nutritious foods.
- **Provides \$130 billion to help schools safely reopen**, and \$35 billion to help institutions of higher education implement public health protocols and execute distance learning.
- Expands access to affordable child care by **creating a \$25 billion emergency stabilization fund for childcare providers**, providing an additional \$15 billion in funding through the Child Care Development Block Grant program, and **increasing tax credits to help cover the cost of child care**.

A crisis of this magnitude requires a robust, comprehensive response that will both alleviate the short-term suffering of people across the United States and work towards long-term investments in America's health and economy. Please stand with Wisconsin's families, frontline health care workers, and communities and pass the American Rescue Plan without delay.

Sincerely,

AFSCME Council 32
BLOC (Black Leaders Organizing Communities)
Citizen Action of Wisconsin
For Our Future WI
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin
SEIU

AFT Wisconsin
Blue Sky Waukesha
Committee to Protect Medicare
Opportunity Wisconsin
Protect Our Care Wisconsin
Wisconsin Muslim Civic Alliance