



June 30, 2020

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the 1.7 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I plead with you to pass the Coronavirus Child Care and Education Relief Act, a visionary bill put forward by Sen. Patty Murray and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer that will provide funding to allow America's public schools, child care centers and universities to reopen safely to serve our nation's families. The bill provides a total of \$430 billion for childcare, K-12 public schools and higher education.

Educators in America—both at the preK-12 level and in higher education—know their students have been deeply affected by three ongoing crises right now: the coronavirus, a recession and racism. They know their students need them. Yet, without plans and resources to make sure students and educators are safe, our school buildings and child care centers can't and won't reopen. We need resources for the health and safety of our classrooms, including deep cleaning procedures, physical distancing protocols and personal protective equipment. We need resources to support our most vulnerable students who have faced trauma and learning loss after months of distance learning. This bill, through the Education Stabilization Fund created by the CARES Act, will provide \$175 billion for preK-12 systems, and \$132 billion at the higher education level, to address these challenges.

We cannot and must not delay providing the essential resources to address these challenges before our nation. The longer we delay, the more intractable the problems, the more difficult the recovery and the more expensive the solutions.

The bill also fixes the problems created by Education Secretary Betsy DeVos in her harmful and incorrect interpretation of the CARES Act, which has caused confusion and delay of money and services for public schools and university students.

After already taking on unprecedented expenses at the beginning of the pandemic, child care providers, public schools and universities all face the prospect of catastrophic state and local budget cuts.

Our union, our members and school administrators are working with public health officials to plan to safely reopen their doors, but it's being done piecemeal without support from the Education Department or the administration. The [AFT provided a plan back in April](#) to safely reopen America's public schools and provide students what they need. We believe that will require both stabilizing state and local school budgets and

American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.



providing an additional \$116 billion. That's why the Senate Democratic bill is so necessary. It is unconscionable that the federal government has still not provided a plan or resources to stave off disaster, much less get students what they need.

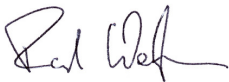
The Coronavirus Child Care and Education Relief Act would provide the necessary investments for child care, food security, Title I, English learners, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, homeless students, career and technical education, and the E-Rate program, to provide necessary technology for schools to weather this crisis and begin serving children and students as quickly and safely as possible.

Unfortunately, Senate Republicans have not put forth a COVID-19 package, despite the fact that 45 days ago, the House of Representatives passed the HEROES Act to help the American people through the public health and economic crises caused by the pandemic.

The American people are deeply troubled and frustrated that President Trump and Senate Republicans are shirking their responsibilities and failing to listen to what they want, and are leaving for vacation for two weeks instead of ensuring that school systems can plan for a safe fall reopening by knowing how much funding they will receive.

I urge you to pass the Coronavirus Child Care and Education Relief Act before leaving for your two week July recess.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randi Weingarten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Randi" and last name "Weingarten" clearly distinguishable.

Randi Weingarten
President

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