April 31, 2021

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Leader McCarthy,

Thank you for your leadership as our country recovers from the most devastating economic crisis since the Great Depression. Congressional efforts to meet the needs of working people and local businesses are vital right now. The undersigned organizations urge you to invest at least $100 billion in workforce development, as proposed in the American Jobs Plan, to ensure workers have skills necessary to access and succeed in good jobs that businesses need filled.

A staggering number of workers – particularly historically underserved workers of color, young people, women, and immigrants – have lost jobs that aren’t coming back. An equitable recovery for these populations will be mostly served through the local workforce system and its stakeholders. There are nearly 10 million workers who are unemployed right now, with increasing job losses in states such as Michigan, Texas, Kentucky, Missouri, and Illinois. More than 1/3 of the job loss over the pandemic will be permanent.

Permanent job loss means workers will need to reskill and upskill to enter new industries. Of workers over 25 who are unemployed, more than 44 percent have no education past high school. Yet, based on projections and lessons learned from past economic downturns, almost all the jobs created in recovery efforts will require some education past high school.

Businesses already faced challenges finding skilled workers prior to the pandemic, a challenge the crisis only exacerbated. Surveys of manufacturing, energy and construction executives found difficulties finding skilled workers were a top concern going into the pandemic and in 2021. Across industries, more than half of workers need access to digital skills to succeed in jobs of the 21st century.
And anticipated industry changes – such as technological adoption – and proposed federal investment will even further add to this challenge. Analyses of previous infrastructure deals suggests that every $100 billion invested creates 1 million new jobs, the majority of which require some training after high school. Employment in healthcare occupations will grow 15 percent from 2019 to 2029, adding 2.4 million new jobs.

Investing in workers’ access to skills that meet industry demand must be a component of the federal response to the current crisis. And workers themselves agree - according to polling commissioned in the summer of 2020, 84% of unemployed workers want Congress to immediately increase investments in training to support their journey back into the workforce.

The nation’s workforce system - convened through workforce development boards, career and technical education, adult basic education providers, and the nation’s community colleges - stand poised to address this need, but desperately need federal investments to meet this demand. Further compounding the funding issues is a two-decade history of declining federal investments in the workforce system.

Except for an initial investment of $345 million, Congress has not funded workforce development in any of its COVID response packages to date. A $100 billion investment in workforce development would mean Congress lives up to its responsibility to workers, to businesses and to communities across the country.

We urge you to make critical investments of no less than $100 billion for workforce development in the next recovery package to ensure that all workers have the skills and reemployment assistance necessary, and all businesses can contribute to, a truly inclusive economic recovery. This scale of investment is critical to meeting U.S. workers’ and businesses’ need in the current crisis. We thank you for your attention to these important issues.

Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School
Adaptive Human Capital, LLC.
Adult Education and Literacy
Adult Learning Alliance of Arkansas
Adults Can Learn To Read
Advance CTE
African American Health Alliance
Albany Can Code, Inc
Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council
Alianza Municipal de Servicios Integrados, Inc.
All Saints Literacy Center
Allegheny County
Allegheny County Employment & Training
Alternative Schools Network
AMANAEduConsults LLC
American Association of Port Authorities
Accelerate Apprenticeship for Transportation
American Association of Community Colleges
American Dream Home Care Agency LLC
American YouthWorks
America’s Promise Alliance
Aneta Uplifts, LLC
Anne Arundel County Literacy Council
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation
Arc of Rensselaer County
Area 14 WDB-Ohio
Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning
Arizona Workforce Association
Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions
Associated Resources
Association for Career and Technical Education
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs
Augustus F. Hawkins Foundation
Barbara R Murray & Associates - DOL OA
Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board
Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council
Better Decisions Better Choices Reentry Services Inc
English At Large
English Language Network
Excel, Inc.
Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.
Fayetteville Adult Education - Fayetteville, Arkansas
Fill My Cup!
Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board
First Institute
First Planning District Workforce Board
Foothills Adult Education
Former Unemployed
Forum for Youth Investment
Fox Cities Workforce Development Board
Fox Valley Literacy
Franklin Hampshire Employment and Training Consortium
Franklin Township Adult School
FREED Texas
Friends of the Lawton Public Library
Full Employment Council
Garden State Employment and Training Assoc.
Geaux Jobs - LWDA 20
gener8tor
George Washington Institute of Public Policy, GWU
Godman Guild Association
Good Counsel Learning Center Inc.,
Goodwill Industries International, Inc.
Goodwill of Silicon Valley
Goodwill Southern California
Greater Orange Area Literacy Services (GOALS)
Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board
Greater West Town Community Development Project
GuilfordWorks Workforce Development Board
Gulf Coast Workforce Board, Houston, Texas
Hampden County Career Center, Inc.,
Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee
Hardee County Adult Education
HCSD Options Adult Education Center
Heartland Workforce Solutions
Hennepin Carver Workforce Development Board
HES Konsult AB
HFM BOCES
Hidalgo County Literacy Program
Horry County Schools
Houston Vital Signs, Inc.
1Huddle
Hudson Valley RAEN
Huntington Beach Adult School
Hutchinson Public Library Adult Education Program
in Hutchinson, Kansas
Indiana Association for Adult and Continuing Education
Impact Equitable Justice Inc
Impact Institute
Indiana Institute for Working Families
Indiana Workforce Board Alliance
Individual Literacy Training
Iowa Association for Career and Technical Education
Jackie’s Jams
Jamaica Plain Community Centers Adult Learning Program
Jefferson-Lewis WDB
Jewish Vocational & Career Counseling Service (JVS)
Jobs for the Future
JobsFirstNYC
JobTrain
Jordahl Academy
Joy Is Free LLC
JVS Boston
JVS SoCal
Kansas WorkforceONE
Kent Intermediate School District
Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education
Kingsland University
KRA Corporation
Labor Institute for Training, Inc.
Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board
Lake County Workforce Development Board
Lane Workforce Partnership
Lawton Area Literacy Council
LeAnn Duran Consulting
Leclede Literacy Council ALV
Lehman College, CUNY
Leung Consulting
Lewis & Clark Literacy Council
Lewiston Adult Education
Liberated Success, Inc.
Lincoln County Adult Literacy
Lincoln Land Community College Adult Education
Literacy Action
Literacy Action Corps of Columbia MO
Literacy Connects
Literacy Council of Alaska
Literacy Council of Reading-Berks, Inc.
Literacy Delaware
Literacy Lighthouse
Literacy Nassau
Literacy New Jersey
Literacy Pittsburgh
Literacy Volunteers and Advocates
Literacy Volunteers at Centenary College
Literacy Volunteers of Collier County
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Augusta
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Waterbury
Literacy Volunteers of Methuen
Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County
Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County
Literacy Volunteers of Sullivan County, NY
Literacy West NY
Literacy KC
Don Bosco School of English
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
LOYOLA Associates
Magna International Inc.
Managed Career Solutions, SPC
Manpower San Diego
Manufacturing Renaissance
Mariposa County Adult Literacy Program
Martinez Adult Education
MasshireHolyoke
Maryland Workforce Association
Mass Workforce Association
Massachusetts Workforce Association
MassHire Berkshire Career Center
MassHire Cape and Islands Career Center
McHenry County Workforce Network
Mental Health & Addiction Association of Oregon
Merete Hotel Management
Michigan Works! Association
Michigan Works! Southwest
Michigan Works! West Central
Mid-Valley STEM-CTE Hub
Midwest Urban Strategies, Inc
Milan Community Education
Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards
Mississippi Delta Council for Farmworkers Opportunities
Moberly Area Community College
Modestly Cover Diaper Bank of Essex County
MorrisSussexWarren Workforce Development Board
MTS Training Academy, Inc.
Mustard Seed Training
My American Dream
Napa County HHSA
Nashville International Center for Empowerment
Nassau Community College
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE)
National Association of Workforce Boards
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Center for Families Learning
National Fund for Workforce Solutions
National Job Corps Association
National League of Cities
National Partnership for New Americans
National Skills Coalition
National Urban League
National Working Positive Coalition
National Youth Employment Coalition
NEMO Workforce Development Board
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
Neuhaus Education Center
New Moms
New Path Consulting, LLC
New River - Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board
New York State Department of Labor; America’s Career Center
Next Advance, Inc. The Capital Region Workforce Development Board
Niagara County Workforce Development Board
NMSU Grants Adult Education
Nurses Association of the Counties of LI
NY Association of Training and Employment Professionals
NYC Employment and Training Coalition (NYCETC)
NYCID
Oakland County Michigan Works!
Oakland Housing Authority
Oakland Workforce Development Board
Office of Workforce Strategy
Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education
OneFuture Coachella Valley
Oneida County Workforce Development
Oneida County Workforce Investment Board
Opportunity Youth United
Orange County Workforce Development Board
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Workforce Development Board
Oregon Aero, Inc.
Oregon Community College Association
Oregon Tradeswomen
Oregon Workforce Partnership
Orleans County Job Development Agency
Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.
Oswego County Workforce NY Career Center
Ouachita Parish Workforce Development Board-81
PA Workforce Development Association
Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment (PACE)
PacMtn Workforce Development Council
Paola Adult Education Center
Park City School District/Community Education
Partner4Work
Pelican Brewing Company/Kiwanda Hospitality
Per Scholas Greater Boston
PHI National
Philadelphia Works
Philadelphia Youth Network
PIER 39
Pima County (AZ) Adult Probation LEARN
Pima County Community and Workforce
Placer School for Adults
Port of Oakland
Project HIRED
PROJECT RENEWAL
ProLiteracy
Proteus Inc. CA
Providence Public Library
Puerto Rican Police Association
Queens Community House
Rapides Workforce Development Board 61
Rboc, Inc. Rebuilding Our Community
REDF
Region III Workforce Development Board, Kanawha County
Region VII Workforce Development Board (WV)
Regional Adult & Career Education
Regional Office of Education #33
Regional Office of Education #45
Regional Partnership Workforce Development Board
Regis College Online
Relatable Learning, Inc.
RespectAbility
Restaurant Opportunities Centers United
Restore Education
Riverside Community College District
Rockland BOCES
ROC United
Rogue Community College
Rogue Workforce Partnership
Rural America Center
Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc
Safer Foundation
Samaritan Health Services
San Diego City College
San Diego Council on Literacy
San Diego Workforce Partnership
San Patricio County Adult Literacy Council, Inc
San Ysidro Adult School, High School Diploma Program, HiSet and GED
San Ysidro Health
Saratoga County Career Center
Schenectady County Job Training Agency
Selaco Workforce Development Board
SEMCA Michigan Works!
Sequoia Adult School
SER Metro-Detroit
ShiftUp
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Siena Literacy Center
Signature Careers LLC
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York
Sixth Planning District Workforce Development Board
Area 60
Skills2Compete-Colorado
SkillSource
Southern Maine Community College
Soft Skills Zone, LLC
Sound Learning
Sound Learning Board of Directors, President
Sound Manufacturing, Inc.
South Bay Workforce Investment Board
South Carolina Adult and Continuing Education
South Central Iowa Local Workforce Development Board
South Central Iowa Workforce Board
South Central PA Works
South Central Region 8 Workforce Board, Inc.
South Coast Literacy Council
South Western West Virginia Region 2 Workforce
Investment Southeast Community Services
Southern Indiana Works
Southern Workforce Board, Inc.
SOWIB
St Louis Urban League
St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board
State of Nevada, Employment Security Division
SUNY Bronx Educational Opportunity Center
Sweetwater UHSD Adult Education
SWW Workforce Development Board
Sylvester Broome Empowerment Village
Talent Development Coalition (TDC) & CarNav Group
Texas Conservation Corps
The Andromeda Community Initiative
The Boston Foundation
The Capital Region Workforce Development Board
The Center for Work Ethic Development
The Community Outcomes Fund at Maycomb Capital
The Corps Network
The Doe Fund
The Education STREaM, Inc.
The Greenlining Institute
The Spero Project
The Westchester County Association, Inc.
The Workforce Connection
The Write Stuff-RVA
Thorn Hill Education Center
Three Rivers Regional Commission
Tillamook Bay Community College
Tipping Point Community
Topeka Literacy Council, Inc.
Trenton Area Soup Kitchen
United States Workforce Associations
United Way of Buffalo and Erie County
United Way of Central Iowa
United Way Worldwide
United Ways of Texas
Unitek Learning
UNITE-LA
Universal Plastics Corporation
Upper Peninsula Michigan Works
Upwardly Global
Urban League of Metro St. Louis
US Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development
Valueusa
Vermont Technical College
Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota
Virginia Assoc. for Career and Technical Education
Virginia Association for Adult and Continuing Education
Virginia Association of Workforce Directors
Virtual Professionals LLC
Vista Adult School
Vista Unified School District
Volunteers of America of Massachusetts, Inc.
Waite Consultants
Walworth County Literacy Council
Washington Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition
Washington Association for Career & Technical Education
Washington Workforce Association
Wayne Township Adult Education
Workforce Development Board of Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties
West Central Job Partnerships, INC.
West Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board
West Michigan Works!