

April 20, 2021

The Honorable Joe Biden
President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

RE: Economic Stimulus and the Work Opportunities and Resources to Keep Nonprofit Organizations Well (WORK NOW) Act

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your Administration's acknowledgements of the many contributions charitable organizations have made to the relief of the American People for the devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Charitable nonprofits will continue to be essential to our country's economic and social wellbeing in recovery and rebuilding. In recognition of this need, we bring to your attention a straight-forward solution that builds on the inherent strengths of the nonprofit community to secure employment for hundreds of thousands of our fellow residents in meaningful jobs. We ask that you express your support for inclusion of the WORK NOW Act in your economic stimulus legislation.

The Work Opportunities and Resources to Keep Nonprofit Organizations Well (WORK NOW) Act (S. 740 and H.R. 1987), introduced in March by Senator Amy Klobuchar and Representative Linda Sanchez, would create a new grant program to help nonprofit organizations retain their employees, scale their service delivery, and provide unemployed people with new jobs serving their communities. The WORK NOW Act would inject \$50 billion into frontline nonprofits – with most of the funds allocated through states, Tribal governments, and localities – to enable them to pay the wages, salaries, and benefits of returning or newly hired employees.

The need for this support for charitable organizations cannot be denied or understated. Pre-pandemic, charitable nonprofits employed more than 12.5 million people, including 65% of the nonprofit sector employees being women and nearly one-in-three nonprofit employees being people of color. Charitable nonprofits make up the third largest industry in the country – larger than the construction, finance, and manufacturing industries. As of March 2021, however, well more than 800,000 nonprofit jobs have been lost due to the pandemic, creating undue challenges particularly for women and communities of color disproportionately pushed out of the workforce due to no fault of their own as a result of the pandemic. Despite overall growth in recent job market numbers, employment data are worse for communities of color than for white workers. While unemployment rates for white workers fell to 5.6% in February 2021, Black and Latinx workers reported jobless rates at 9.9% and 8.5% respectively.

Further, our Nation's charitable organizations – while struggling themselves – have largely met the increased demands for their services. Yet, charitable giving to the frontline nonprofits in local communities upon whom people rely everyday has not kept up; according to a recent report charitable giving to smaller nonprofits declined by over 7% percent last year.

Provided adequate resources, nonprofits are proven jobs creators. Even before COVID-19, few, if any, public charities could boast of being overstaffed. The truth in communities throughout the United States is that almost all charitable nonprofits have struggled to advance their specific missions relying on fewer employees and volunteers than is ideal. The brilliance of the WORK NOW Act is that it channels this reality by providing resources to trusted organizations that can staff-up quickly and effectively in ways that both provide needed employment and address identified community needs. When executed with an equity lens, this bill can address the sluggish employment statistics for women and communities of color, within the nonprofit sector as a whole, and in local communities throughout

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America. The WORK NOW Act recognizes charitable nonprofits as the quintessential “shovel-ready” projects because their missions and track-records in their communities are clear, and they can put people to work quickly in meaningful jobs that benefit the public good rather than a private interest’s personal profits.

In the coming weeks, many will debate the merits of various proposals related to infrastructure projects. We point out that charitable nonprofits are, and will continue to be, the foundation of every community in America, ministering to the physical, spiritual, and cultural wellbeing of our residents, upholding community values, and strengthening local economies in partnership with governments and businesses. We urge you to insist on the inclusion of the WORK NOW Act in any infrastructure legislation that you sign, and we stand ready to support you in advancing this important priority.

Sincerely,

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| After-School All-Stars | Local Learning: The National Network for Folk Arts in Education |
| Alliance for Strong Families and Communities | Lutheran Services in America |
| Alternate ROOTS | March of Dimes |
| American Alliance of Museums | Meals on Wheels America |
| American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network | Mental Health America |
| American Heart Association | MENTOR National |
| American Lung Association | National Assembly of State Arts Agencies |
| Americans for the Arts | National Council of Nonprofits |
| Arts Alliance Illinois | National Health Council |
| Association of Art Museum Directors | National Recreation and Park Association |
| Boys & Girls Clubs of America | National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) |
| Cancer Support Community | Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies |
| Catholic Charities USA | New York Foundation for the Arts |
| Chamber Music America | OPERA America |
| Communities In Schools National Office | Performing Arts Alliance |
| Council on Foundations | Recording Academy |
| Covenant House International | The International Association of Blacks in Dance, Inc. |
| Dance/USA | The Jewish Federations of North America |
| Future of Music Coalition | The Nonprofit Alliance |
| Futures Without Violence | Theatre Communications Group |
| Girl Scouts of the USA | Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America |
| Girls Inc. | United Philanthropy Forum |
| Goodwill Industries International, Inc. | United Way Worldwide |
| Habitat for Humanity International | VisionServe Alliance |
| Horizons National | Volunteers of America |
| Independent Sector | YMCA of the USA |
| Leadership 18 | YWCA USA |
| League of American Orchestras | |