

Economic Stimulus and WORK NOW Act

May 11, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

We understand that soon you will be sitting down together with President Biden to chart a course for recovery from the pandemic that has ravaged the health and economy of our nation for more than a year. The undersigned organizations and their networks of charitable nonprofits, which operate in every community in America, anxiously await the results of your discussions because the wellbeing of the millions of individuals we serve every day is at stake. We ask that as you craft bipartisan legislation, you include the substance of the WORK NOW Act in any bill you send to the President for his signature.

The **Work Opportunities and Resources to Keep Nonprofit Organizations Well (WORK NOW) Act** (S. 740 and H.R. 1987) is 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. The legislation would create a new grant program to help nonprofit organizations retain their employees, scale their service delivery, and create new job opportunities for unemployed persons to serve within their own 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. Pre-pandemic, charitable nonprofits employed more than 12.5 million people, nearly 65% of whom were women and almost a third of whom were people of color. Charitable nonprofits make up the third largest industry in the country, employing more people 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 as a result of the pandemic.

Further, our nation's charitable organizations have struggled to do everything possible to meet the increased demands for their services. Those increased needs and changes in service models due to the pandemic, have come with dramatically increased costs. Yet, charitable giving to the frontline nonprofits in local communities upon whom people rely every day has not kept up; according to a recent report charitable giving to smaller nonprofits declined by over 7% last year.

**Nonprofit Letter to Congressional Leaders
on the WORK NOW Act
May 11, 2021**

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 most charitable nonprofits have fought valiantly to advance their specific missions, too often being forced to rely on fewer employees and volunteers than is ideal. The brilliance of the WORK NOW Act is that it would provide resources to trusted organizations that can staff-up quickly and effectively in local communities that would immediately see benefits of expanded employment and delivery of services. The WORK NOW Act recognizes charitable nonprofits as 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.

At your upcoming meeting and in the coming weeks, debate is likely to be intense over 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 spiritual and cultural wellbeing of our residents, improving their mental and physical health, upholding community values, and strengthening local economies in partnership with governments and businesses. That is why elected officials from all political perspectives turn to charitable organizations in their communities to deliver essential, cost-effective results. We urge you to include the WORK NOW Act in any infrastructure legislation that you pass, and we stand ready to support you in advancing this important priority.

Sincerely,

**After-School All-Stars
Alliance for Strong Families and
Communities
American Alliance of Museums
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
Americans for the Arts
Association of Art Museum Directors
Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Catholic Charities USA
Council on Foundations
Dance/USA
Girl Scouts of the USA
Girls Inc.
Goodwill Industries International, Inc.
Habitat for Humanity International
Independent Sector
League of American Orchestras
Lutheran Services in America
March of Dimes**

**Meals on Wheels America
Mental Health America
National Council of Nonprofits
National Health Council
Network of Jewish Human Service
Agencies
OPERA America
Recording Academy
The Jewish Federations of North America
The Nonprofit Alliance
Theatre Communications Group
Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations
of America
United Philanthropy Forum
United Way Worldwide
Volunteers of America
Welcoming America
YMCA of the USA
YWCA USA**