



June 22, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

Dear President Biden, Speaker Pelosi, and Majority Leader Schumer,

As a coalition of some of the nation's largest labor unions and environmental organizations, collectively representing millions of members and supporters, the BlueGreen Alliance and its partners urge you to swiftly pass a bold jobs and economic investment package that addresses the intersecting crises of climate change, income inequality, and racial injustice while creating high-quality, good-paying jobs and delivering a more equitable and cleaner economy.

We thank you for your efforts to date to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on workers and their families, but are troubled by recent proposals that offer a watered down set of economic recovery investments. The insufficient scale and scope of these proposals would sideline a number of critical investments that our communities urgently need, fail to meet the magnitude of the crises we face, and leave millions of workers behind.

Working people and their families need bold action now. A recent BlueGreen Alliance survey of voters in 6 Midwestern states found bipartisan support for a strong economic recovery package that puts people back to work, rebuilds and modernizes our infrastructure, retools American manufacturing, and strengthens our social infrastructure. Specifically, 90% of those voters were in support of investments in infrastructure and manufacturing, 84% placed a high priority on strengthening our social infrastructure and public services, and 72% supported increasing the production of clean energy and clean technologies. Many of these priorities are reflected in the American Jobs Plan.

The time to act is now. We urge you to seize this window of opportunity and pass bold legislation and commensurate investment that builds on the American Jobs Plan and American Families Plan, conditioned on high-road labor, equity, and environmental standards. This is essential to sustain and grow a still-tenuous economic recovery that continues to present a shortfall of jobs--with the national unemployment rate at close to 6 percent, and rates above the national average in states like Arizona, Nevada and Pennsylvania, and above 8 percent in California and New York.

This level of investment is necessary to help workers and their families overcome the economic devastation of the pandemic while also attacking our nation's persistent and unacceptably high levels of income inequality by creating millions of high-quality jobs in clean manufacturing, clean energy, restoration and resilience, the care economy, and upgrading our infrastructure and buildings. Importantly, these investments must be prioritized for communities that need it the most; especially low-income communities, communities of color, communities facing environmental injustice, and deindustrialized communities, in which workers face far higher rates of unemployment than national and state averages.

We urge you to ensure that this investment is as bold and transformative as our current moment demands and reject short-sighted proposals that would delay or weaken economic recovery, and that may fracture the broad array of constituencies and organizations that are unified in support of more ambitious proposals, such as the American Jobs Plan and American Families Plan. Now is not the time for small-minded measures.

Congress must act now to:

- **Invest in our infrastructure**, including by modernizing our schools, hospitals, and transit systems; delivering broadband to rural communities; expanding clean energy; modernizing our grid and upgrading water systems; and protecting communities through natural infrastructure resiliency. These investments can provide a much-needed jolt to our economy while delivering good jobs and public health and climate benefits to communities.

- **Support and retool America’s manufacturing sector** with a major reinvestment in fortifying and transforming heavy industry and retooling to reduce emissions and build more of the clean products, materials, and technologies of the future here—all while providing more pathways into good, family-supporting jobs. We cannot cede American manufacturing jobs to our global competitors because we failed to be forward-thinking about boosting the sector for the short and long term.
- **Rebuild the public sector and invest in social infrastructure and the care economy.** The crises we face have put a spotlight on the critical importance of investing in the workers on the front lines of fighting this virus and that keep our communities thriving, such as first responders, education workers, nurses, public health workers, social workers, safety net program workers, homecare, utility workers, and childcare workers. We need to rebuild the capacity of the public sector, the health care system, education, and community-based services to prepare for and respond to disasters like COVID-19 today or other crises like climate change.
- **Provide critical long term support and protections for workers.** Workers and communities cannot deal with crises alone—whether they are disastrous hurricanes, fires, or global pandemics. We must rebuild and expand the social safety net, including pensions, healthcare, and retirement security, and ensure and enforce worker and community health and safety. This should start with passing the PRO Act. These policies will help ensure that working families are better equipped to handle the next financial, health, or other crisis we face.
- **Prioritize equitable rebuilding and investments in those communities most in need,** including low-income communities, communities of color, communities facing environmental injustice, and deindustrialized communities. This should include support for workers hardest hit by changes in the energy economy and disabled coal miners with black lung. The response to this crisis should deliver a healthier, cleaner, and more equitable future.

If we invest now at the scale needed to truly build back better from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we can build a stronger, fairer, and cleaner economy that creates and sustains the high-quality jobs of the future and makes our communities and workers more resilient to crises.

Please also find enclosed a full list of BlueGreen Alliance priorities for an economic recovery package.

Sincerely,

Jason Walsh, Executive Director
BlueGreen Alliance

Mitchell Bernard, President
Natural Resources Defense Council

James Slevin, President
Utility Workers Union of America

Randi Weingarten, President
American Federation of Teachers

Fred Krupp, President
Environmental Defense Fund

Timothy Driscoll, President
International Union of Bricklayers
and Allied Craftworkers

James A. Williams, Jr., General Vice-President
International Union of Painters and Allied
Trades

Michael Brune, Executive Director
Sierra Club

Mary Kay Henry, International President
Service Employees International Union

Kathleen Rest, Executive Director
Union of Concerned Scientists

Mark McManus, President
United Association of Plumbers and
Pipefitters

Gene Karpinski, President
League of Conservation Voters