The Honorable Charles Schumer  
The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C., 20510  

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515  

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Chairman Leahy, and Chair DeLauro,  

The Worker Power Coalition and the undersigned organizations ask you to fully fund the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), by increasing funding in FY 2023 to at least $368 million. As you know, the NLRB has not seen a funding increase since 2014. Due to inflation alone, this leaves the Board significantly underfunded. Beyond that, the NLRB has seen a large uptick in the number of filings for union elections and investigations into Unfair Labor Practices. Despite the best efforts of the staff and leadership, the current funding level has left the Board understaffed and unable to handle its growing workload.

Favorability for unions is higher than it has been in decades, and workers are moving to organize at record paces. Tens of millions of workers would join a union today if they had the option. Yet as this wave of organizing is sweeping the nation at stores like Starbucks, Apple and Amazon, billionaire CEOs attempt to crush these efforts, threaten and fire employees for standing up for their rights at work. In fact, employers are charged with violating the law in 41.5% of all union elections. The NLRB exists to enforce the National Labor Relations Act, which guarantees rights for most private sector workers to organize and collectively bargain. Without increased funding, the NLRB will remain unable to adequately monitor free elections, investigate violations of the law and judge abuses where they occur.

Between FY 2021 and FY 2022, union election petitions to the NLRB increased 58%. In the same time period, Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charges increased by 14%. These workers are simply expressing their rights to form a union as guaranteed by federal law. The field staff at the NLRB has been cut by 37% since 2014 – and 50% since 2002. This severe understaffing means that the Board is unable to adequately service the needs of these workers. In fact, the NLRB staff union itself claims “the agency no longer has the resources to adequately enforce its mission.” Even in union drives where employers do not commit ULPs, delays related to understaffing have a chilling effect on workers exercising their rights.

The Worker Power Coalition is a collection of labor unions, grassroots organizations, worker advocates, think tanks, environmental activists, and more. We are united with the
goal of strengthening the labor laws in our country - including passing the PRO Act and strengthening existing labor laws. Adequately funding the NLRB is a key step toward ensuring workers are able to claim their rights in the workplace. By increasing annual funding for the NLRB to at least $368 million, Congress will better ensure that workers are able to express the rights granted to them by the National Labor Relations Act, free from the threat of intimidation and losing their income.

Sincerely,

American Income Life
BlueGreen Alliance
Broward for Progress
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Citizen Action of Wisconsin
CommonDefense.us
Communications Workers of America
Democratic Socialists of America
Economic Policy Institute
Family Values @ Work
Greenpeace USA
Harvard Graduate Students Union - UAW Local 5118
IFPTE Local 98
In Union USA
Indivisible
International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT)
International Union of Painters and Allied Trades
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
Jobs With Justice
Labor Network for Sustainability
MoveOn
National Employment Law Project
National Partnership for Women & Families
Our Revolution
People’s Action
People’s Parity Project
Rideshare Drivers United
Service Employees International Union
Sunrise Movement
The Workers Circle
The Worker Power Coalition
UAW Community Action Program, Massachusetts
Unemployed Workers United
United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of Amer
United for Respect
United Steelworkers
Voices for Progress
Working Families Party