

August 6, 2020

Speaker Nancy Pelosi  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell  
U.S. Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Minority Leader Chuck Schumer  
U.S. Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McCarthy:

One hundred sixty thousand people have died in the U.S. from COVID-19 and nearly 5 million more have been infected with the virus. Cases are skyrocketing in hotspots around the country and virtually every industry is operating in a state of crisis because the pandemic response has been so grossly mismanaged by the Trump administration.

Six months after the first case was diagnosed on U.S. soil, we are still facing a limited supply of tests that take weeks for returned results, a lack of PPE for frontline workers, people of color dying at disproportionate and alarming rates, and parents who cannot safely send their children to school.

Despite this, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's proposal for the next round of coronavirus relief prioritizes the ability of big corporations to avoid responsibility if their workers get sick on the job, instead of ensuring that everyday workers can access paid leave if they or their loved ones need it. It is dark irony that McConnell's backwards plan also essentially admits the pressing need for robust paid leave: if workers weren't in danger of getting sick, big businesses wouldn't need this legal protection.

We are hard pressed to think of a more harmful agenda than telling employers they won't be held accountable when they force employees back onto the job even if their workplace is a coronavirus hot spot.

The safe reopening of schools for in-person learning requires the extension and expansion of emergency paid leave to ensure benefits cover everyone. Giving parents the ability to care for a sick child at home and providing teachers and school support personnel, including cafeteria workers, custodial staff and others, the ability to take time off when ill is critical to stopping the virus.

Senate passage of the paid leave provisions included in the HEROES Act would close significant loopholes in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act that left up to 106 million workers without paid leave, including millions of frontline health care and essential workers who are putting their health at risk to keep us all safe. The benefits in the House-passed HEROES Act are an investment in this country's future. Extending and expanding paid leave benefits is essential to strengthening the health and wellbeing of American communities.

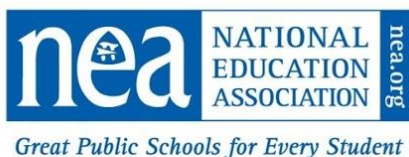
Congress needs to wake up to what is happening. Millions of workers are worrying about their health and their jobs and incomes while this virus wreaks havoc on our country. Never before have paid leave protections been more necessary. For businesses and schools to reopen in-person safely, we need to have confidence that people infected with the virus can stay home or else we're all at risk of infection—and this means closing the gaps that cut millions of workers out of emergency paid sick and family leave protections. Meaningful paid leave that covers everyone is one of our best chances to stop the spread, allow us to safely reopen, and get the economy back on track.

Sincerely,



**SEIU**

**CWA**



**PAID LEAVE**  
for ALL **ACTION**