

April 8, 2021

Dear President Biden,

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) is a religious lobby representing Quakers and friends of Friends throughout the country. In existence since 1943, FCNL has advocated for a more just and peaceful world. We labor for a world where every person's potential may be fulfilled and an earth restored. We advocate for Native American advocacy, justice reform, immigration reform, addressing climate change and environmental justice, economic justice, nuclear disarmament, peacebuilding and reducing militarization in both domestic and foreign policy.

Thank you for your leadership on the American Rescue Plan. This once in a generation piece of legislation provides much-needed relief to families struggling through a once in a century pandemic that resulted in serious ramifications for the economy. FCNL applauds many of the provisions included in the American Jobs Plan and eagerly anticipates the American Families Plan. We cannot simply return to our pre-pandemic society and economy. We need real structural change.

Thus, as you pivot to this next recovery legislation, FCNL urges you to prioritize the following:

- **Make the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit expansions permanent.** Those improvements could cut child poverty in half, and we cannot let this progress expire at the end of the year.
- **Increase funding for the federal government's environmental cleanup and environmental justice initiatives,** including for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Program and for grants programs for local and community environmental justice organizations and community-driven projects.
- **Create a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, specifically immigrant youth, TPS recipients, DED holders, farmworkers and other essential workers.** It is not only morally crucial but also vital to our economic recovery to empower millions of hardworking people who live in the shadows, fearing deportation each day, by creating a pathway to citizenship for them. Many of these undocumented immigrants have served us in crucial industries and our healthcare system during the Covid-19 pandemic and will continue to do so if given the chance.
- **Lift the bans on SNAP and TANF for those with felony drug convictions.** People leaving prisons are very vulnerable and often enjoy very little support. During this sensitive time, they should be able to use SNAP and TANF to get back on their feet.

These collateral consequences, or permanent punishments, which keep the formerly incarcerated from accessing essential services, is simply cruel.

- **Invest in affordable high-speed Internet and broadband access, focusing especially on tribal communities.**
- **Rebuild the nation's housing infrastructure** by closing disparities in home ownership, ending homelessness, and investing in housing assistance. This should include robust funding for affordable housing, rental assistance, and tribal housing.
- **Raise revenues from progressive sources** by raising taxes on corporations and wealthy individuals. Within the last year alone, the combined wealth of U.S. billionaires grew nearly 45% while child hunger soared. This is a moment for bold investments, and responsible revenues can offset these costs while addressing America's growing chasm in income and wealth inequality.

As you navigate the building of this important piece of legislation, we hope that you keep the above-mentioned issues in mind.

We stand ready as a resource to assist your staff as you shepherd this sizeable policy through Congress.

Sincerely,



Diane E. Randall
General Secretary