



# INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

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**MATTHEW S. BIGGS**  
Secretary-Treasurer

March 23, 2020

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

Hon. Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Charles Schumer, Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi & Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leaders Schumer & McCarthy:

As the executive officers of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), representing upwards of 90,000 workers across the country, we would like to thank you for your ongoing legislative efforts to combat the looming serious economic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our Nation is facing its most serious threat since the Great Depression and World War II and nothing short of a pro-active, ambitious, and sustained domestic Marshall Plan is urgently needed to prevent calamity. As you work toward finalizing a bill to help steady our economy during this time, IFPTE urges you to ensure that the resources are geared toward assisting those who need it most – working people.

In 2008, when the Nation faced a serious, but smaller, threat to our economic security, the federal government provided more than a \$1 trillion bail out to the financial sector and Wall Street, including the very culprits who caused and/or profited from the economic chaos. This left working people spending years trying to climb out of the hole created by some of the richest people and institutions in the world, with many of them still behind where they were more than a decade ago. History must not repeat itself. Working people, small businesses, and domestic manufacturing and service sectors from all across the country, owners and employees from all across the political spectrum, urgently need their federal government to come together in this dire moment to help them get through extraordinary, indeed unprecedented, challenges not of their making. The time to help them is now.

In addition to harnessing all of the federal government's considerable capabilities to meet the looming surge in medical needs across the country, we ask that COVID-19 legislative relief feature the following components to protect working Americans from economic ruin and the Nation from a Depression:

1. **All workers whose income is below \$75,000 (or couples with a combined income below \$150,000) should receive a guaranteed monthly income of \$1000/month (\$2000/month for couples) starting April 1<sup>st</sup> and lasting 3 months after the end of the Presidential declaration of emergency, independent of any other benefits they receive. If furthermore, they are the primary legal guardian(s) of a child, they should receive an additional \$500/month (per child, up to an additional \$1500/month total) during this period.**
2. **All workers should receive a retroactive tax break reducing their 2019 tax liability due on July 15, 2020 on all income below \$125,000 (and for couples or heads-of-household with a combined income below \$250,000) by 25% with respect to 2018 tax liability rates.**
3. **All small businesses (i.e., those with gross receipts of less than \$25 million and fewer than 25 employees) should receive a retroactive tax break reducing their total 2019 tax liability**

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on their income by 25% with respect to their current tax liability rates as long as they maintain their February 2020 workforce level (i.e., no layoffs) through 2020 (with a 20% reduction in this tax break for every 5% reduction in workforce, i.e., no tax break if workforce is reduced by 25%). Furthermore, interest-free loans should be made available, guaranteed by the U.S. government.

4. A robust emergency Appropriations fund should be created to guarantee extended coverage of streamlined unemployment insurance claims in all States starting the first week of April and running at least through the remainder of 2020.
5. Financial support for our domestic manufacturing industry, particularly our aerospace industry with the stipulation that no stock buy-backs, no dividend payments, no executive bonus pay outs, and no layoffs may occur in through the end of 2022, or until the loan is fully paid off, which-ever occurs first.
6. Fully fund Obamacare Medicaid program in all States (including those that opted out) on an emergency basis through fiscal year 2020 to cover the uninsured in all States during this crisis.
7. A further increase above the 6.2% increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) rate to States for Medicaid coverage until at least the end of the 2020.
8. Creation of an emergency Appropriations fund of at least \$600B to provide cash packages to be sent directly to the States and Local governments, proportional to their COVID-19 associated costs, such that the Federal government is cost-sharing the burden.

In these dire times, it is horrifying to see corporate interests and their deep pockets jockeying for sweetheart deals masquerading as COVID-19 relief with few or no strings attached, so that an ultra -rich few may profiteer from the suffering of others. The COVID-19 relief legislation should focus first, second, third, and last on working people and small business with any corporate component focused like a laser on job and benefit preservation for working people to keep American families healthy, housed, and fed, with consumer demand remaining high.

The American people have proven themselves, a gain and a gain, resilient in the face of great a diversity. They will undoubtedly prevail a gain. However, Congress and the White House must set aside business and politics as usual and meet the basic needs of millions of Americans who lives will be severely disrupted for at least the next few months, to alleviate the a voidable suffering of millions. No other issue could be more important or more urgent.

Sincerely,



Paul Shearon  
President

Matthew Biggs  
Secretary-Treasurer/Legislative Director