

September 29, 2020

Dear Senator Burr and Senator Tillis,

North Carolina cannot afford inaction on COVID-19 relief.

We write to call on you as our leaders with the power to choose people first and move a comprehensive response to COVID-19 that provides direct aid to families as well as to state and local governments to sustain the response to this public health and economic crisis.

Your actions in the coming days and weeks will determine the trajectory of North Carolina's recovery and eventual safe re-opening. Your actions will determine whether every person in our state has the supports to stay healthy. And your actions now will determine the depth of the economic scars in our communities from this downturn.

A federal package that provides aid to people and state and local governments is essential for North Carolina to strengthen the public institutions in our communities that are responding to the pandemic and supporting a recovery and address hardship.

Just this week we learned that more than 780,000 adults in our state aren't getting enough food because they can't afford it. More than 1 million North Carolinians are at risk of eviction and 1.4 million are behind on utility payments as the season changes. Jobless workers have lost the boost from federal Unemployment Insurance, dampening spending in communities across the state and putting families at risk of being pushed deeper into poverty.

One consequence of job losses in North Carolina is the number of people in the coverage gap has grown, making access to affordable health care out of reach for too many people at a time when health care is fundamental to this recovery. Workers are too often without the personal protective equipment or access to paid sick days that can protect their health and the safety of workplaces.

Hardship is widespread and it requires a response on multiple fronts to ensure that we can secure a recovery. Inaction will prolong the downturn—raising the costs and the stakes for our communities across North Carolina.

The U.S. Senate must move quickly to pass a federal package that provides comprehensive support by, at a minimum, re-establishing the \$600/week boost in Unemployment Insurance; expands eligibility for stimulus payments and ensures an immigrant-inclusive response; boosts food assistance (SNAP) benefits; provides funding for rental and utility assistance; establishes stronger workplace protections; expands access to paid leave and paid sick days; and increases the federal share of Medicaid costs in states.

As our elected leaders, we know you understand the importance of your leadership in this moment and the role of policy in advancing the public good.

We call on you to act now.

Every hour, every day, every week, every month that people face hardship without your action and federal support delays our recovery and worsens the harm to millions of North Carolinians.

AAUW North Carolina

ACLU of North Carolina

AMEXCAN

Black Workers for Justice

Care in Action

Center for Responsible Lending

Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy

Coalition for Health Care of NC

Communications Workers of America

Democracy NC

Disability Rights North Carolina

Down Home North Carolina

Durham People's Alliance

Elinvar

Equality North Carolina

Just Economics

LGBT Center of Raleigh

NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina

National Black Worker Center

National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. - Queen City Metropolitan Chapter

National Conference of Black Lawyers - NC Chapter

NC A. Philip Randolph Institute

NC Alliance of Retired Americans

NC Child

NC Inclusive Disaster Recovery Network (a project of FHLL's Rural Forward NC)

NC League of Conservation Voters

NC Poor People's Campaign

NC Public Service Workers Union - UE Local 150

NC Raise Up/Fight for \$15 and a Union

NC State AFL-CIO

North Carolina AIDS Action Network

North Carolina Association of Educators

North Carolina Business Council

North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness

North Carolina Council of Churches

North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition

North Carolina Housing Coalition

Pisgah Legal Services

Planned Parenthood South Atlantic

SisterSong: Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective

Student Action with Farmworkers

The Collaborative Asset Alliance

United For A Fair Economy

Women Advance

Working America