



## United States Senate

August 3, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer:

With more than 30 million Americans receiving unemployment benefits and with the unemployment rate expected to remain at high levels for the foreseeable future, I believe Congress should provide substantial funding for workforce development programs as it has done in previous recessions.

Workforce development programs are critical not just for skill development, but also for helping dislocated workers transition to better-paying, more stable jobs. In the past, Congress has acknowledged that a recession is an excellent time to invest in and expand existing workforce programs since millions of laid off workers have opportunities to develop their skills they may not have had when they were employed full-time.

The HEALS Act, which Senate Republicans announced last week, includes just under \$1 billion for workforce programs, but this is far short of the scale of funding Congress has provided during previous recessions. For example, the 2009 *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* provided nearly \$5 billion for workforce programs. In part due to the larger scale of the current economic crisis, the Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce has called for at least \$15 billion in funding for such programs.

Tens of millions of Americans are currently without jobs, and many of them are likely to remain unemployed for the foreseeable future. It is imperative that Congress help these dislocated workers by providing funding for workforce development programs in the next coronavirus relief bill that is commensurate with the scale of the current economic downturn.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dianne Feinstein".

Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>