

February 11, 2021

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
Chairwoman
Oversight and Reform Committee
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James Comer
Ranking Member
Oversight and Reform Committee
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Maloney and Ranking Member Comer:

On behalf of the undersigned unions which represent hundreds of thousands of federal government workers and employees of the United States Postal Service across the country, we write to urge your support for fifteen weeks of paid emergency sick leave in the Oversight and Reform Committee's section of the COVID-19 relief package for the Budget Reconciliation bill. Our union members are dedicated public servants working on the frontlines to protect and serve the American public.

We strongly support Section 5111 in the Chairwoman's Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute (ANS), providing fifteen weeks of emergency paid sick leave to all federal workers and employees of the United States Postal Service. In the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, federal employees were provided emergency paid sick leave to use if they contracted COVID-19, were exposed to the virus, or needed to care for loved ones. That leave expired on December 31, 2020, but the need for the leave has grown as the virus continues to spread and most public schools and childcare centers are not open. Workers are being exposed to the virus on the job in greater numbers and should not have to face the risk of taking time off without pay to quarantine or convalesce.

Among the workers who would be eligible for this benefit are support personnel at the Veterans Health Administration and Indian Health Service facilities, Transportation Security Officers exposed in airports, United States Postal Service employees, corrections officers employed in Bureau of Prisons facilities, Customs and Border Protection Officers and other law enforcement officers, federal firefighters, air traffic controllers, inspectors in meat and poultry plants, and numerous others serving the public on the frontlines.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency of providing federal and Postal Service workers with paid leave for their own illness and for dependent care needs. The federal government should be a model employer, lead by example and provide emergency paid sick leave to all federal workers during the current pandemic.

Our unions strongly urge your support for inclusion of Section 5111 in the Oversight and Reform section of the COVID-19 relief package. For additional information or questions, please contact Fiona Kohrman, fiona.kohrman@afge.org.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (AFGE)
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC)
National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU)