

April 2, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy,

The undersigned organizations applaud bipartisan agreement that has led to three response packages to our current health crisis and its economic impact. As Congress continues work on future stimulus packages, we strongly urge members to include investments in both infrastructure and for development of an infrastructure workforce to deliver on that investment.

There is bi-partisan support for a major effort to re-build our nation's infrastructure, which could create millions of jobs that will be needed even more coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. **We urge Congress to ensure that any infrastructure package includes support for comprehensive training and support services to prepare workers with skills necessary to succeed in in-demand infrastructure industries.**

Our current health crisis has made the need for reliable roads and railways to transport critical health care supplies and groceries more critical. The current crisis has made the need for reliable internet access and broadband more critical. And it has made the construction of hospitals most critical. These critical demands all rely on skilled workers in jobs at the backbone of our economy. Congress should invest in our greatest asset – our people.

Our nation's infrastructure is in dire need of an upgrade. The American Society of Civil Engineers gives our infrastructure [a D+ grade](#) based on the system's capacity – or more accurately, lack thereof – condition, funding, future need, operation and maintenance, public safety, resilience, and innovation. Completing the projects possible with infrastructure investment at the scale necessary to respond to this crisis, however, requires investing in our human capital to create a diverse pipeline of workers that are trained with the skills necessary to access and succeed in these infrastructure jobs.

Businesses in infrastructure are already facing intense labor shortages due to impending retirements, a lack of diversity in the workforce, and overall skill shortages. According to a [report](#) by the Departments of Education and Labor, there are 68 percent more projected job openings in infrastructure over the next five years than there are students training for these jobs. The U.S. would need to increase our infrastructure workforce by 4.6 million workers by 2022 just to keep pace with current and projected hiring needs – a number that would only get larger given the millions of new jobs that a potential \$2 trillion new infrastructure investment would create.

Investments in infrastructure and job creation in a future stimulus package are vital to responding to the current crisis and its economic impact and that investment must include access to skills and training for workers to fill new and existing openings in infrastructure industries. If you have any questions, please contact Katie Spiker, Director of Government Affairs at National Skills Coalition, at KatieS@nationalskillscoalition.org.

Thank you for your attention to these important issues.

Sincerely,

