

NEA ACTION NEEDED:
Economic Recovery Package Moving
THIS WEEK



*Contact all Members of Congress immediately & urge them to support passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment bill. Analyses of the proposal's impact on states are available on the NEA website at <http://www.nea.org/home/29549.htm>.

*Go to the NEA website <http://capwiz.com/nea/issues/alert/?alertid=12451196> to send messages of support to Congress.

Talking Points in Support of the
American Recovery and Reinvestment Bill

- * I urge the House to act quickly to pass the proposed American Recovery and Reinvestment Bill.
- * This proposal includes the investments in education, health care, and other areas necessary to jump-start the economy, create jobs, and help struggling families and communities.
- * California is facing a \$42 billion shortfall in this next 18 months. Without some help, public education will take huge hit, impacting class sizes and laying off 25000 teachers, which will further hurt the economy.]
- * I am very pleased that the proposed package includes significant investments in education, including increased funding for Title I and IDEA special education, and major investments in school construction. This funding will take pressure off state budgets and will infuse money into communities where it is most needed.
- * The proposed education funding provided directly to states through existing funding formulas is particularly critical. It offers an effective, efficient way to stimulate the economy, protect and create jobs, and shore up distressed communities.

* Unlike investments in other industries, education funding reaches every community in the nation. Therefore, the impact of additional funding will be felt in every city, small town, and rural area. And, because state formulas are designed to provide assistance to those areas most in need, additional funding would help save jobs in the very communities where they are needed the most.

* The proposed school modernization funding will also provide an immediate stimulus to local economies. In fact, it will create thousands of new jobs in the construction industry and among the many construction industry suppliers, ranging from architects and engineers to roofing contractors and other workers who design and build our nation's schools.

* I am also very pleased that the plan would address needs in unemployment insurance, nutrition assistance, and other programs to help families meet basic needs during this economic crisis.

* Again, I urge Congress to act quickly to pass this urgent legislation.

More information:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The full House is expected to debate and vote on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Bill this Wednesday, January 28. The bill continues to include significant investments in education, including increases for Title I, IDEA, and school modernization, as well as important provisions addressing health care, nutrition assistance, and unemployment insurance. Most significantly, the bill includes the NEA proposal to provide flexible funding for states through existing education funding formulas. Passage of this package is far from assured and grassroots action is critical to show strong support for the proposal.

SENATE

This week, the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees will mark-up their version of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan. Like the House version, the Senate proposal includes a number of proposals put forth by NEA and lobbied aggressively by NEA lobbyists, including:

* School modernization assistance -- \$16 billion in grants to repair, renovate and construct public schools, and \$3.5 billion to improve higher education facilities. On the tax side, \$10 billion for new construction bonds (\$5 billion for each year 2009 and 2010); \$200 million per year for 2009-2010 for Native American tribes; and \$1.4 billion in Qualified Zone Academy Bond funds for 2009-2010.

- * \$39 billion to local school districts and public colleges and universities distributed through existing state and federal formulas (NEA's proposal!).
- * \$25 billion to states for other high-priority needs such as public safety and other critical services, which may include education.
- * Title I: \$13 billion to help close the achievement gap and enable disadvantaged students to reach their potential.
- * Special Education/IDEA: \$13 billion to increase the Federal share of special education services to its highest level ever.
- * Pell Grants: \$13.9 billion to increase the Pell Grant maximum award and pay for increases in program costs resulting from increased eligibility and higher Pell Grant awards.

The Senate bill also includes NEA-supported investments in early childhood programs, health care, and nutrition assistance to help struggling families.

**Thank you for your continued assistance on
this URGENT matter.
NEA will continue to update us as additional
information becomes available.**