

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 30, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris:

Thank you for your leadership in outlining a bold American Rescue Plan proposal to crush the virus, meet the public health and economic crises the American people face, and provide resources for our nation's schools and businesses to reopen safely. As your Administration looks to move forward with its Build Back Better Jobs and Economic Recovery plan, we are strongly supportive of your proposal to invest \$450 billion in home and community-based services (HCBS). This historic investment will help build a strong and robust workforce with higher pay, benefits, and a choice to join a union. It will advance racial and gender equity and make it possible for older adults and people with disabilities to receive long-term services and supports in their homes and communities.

During your campaign, you released a proposal to invest \$450 billion in Medicaid home and community-based services (HCBS). These resources will address the needs of children with complex medical needs, youth and adults with disabilities as well as aging adults, and will address the long-term care crisis that existed even before the pandemic. The current patchwork of underfunded Medicaid programs has forced many aging adults and people with disabilities to forgo the services they need or to rely unpaid care and support provided by family and friends.

This investment in HCBS as part of your Build Back Better Plan would transform our nation's caregiving system while also driving sustainable economic growth and meeting the health care needs of our nation's aging population. It would help lead the American economy out of the pandemic-induced recession by increasing employment and enabling those receiving services to fully participate in their communities. It would transform low-paid caregiving jobs into family-sustaining occupations with higher wages, benefits and the opportunity to join a union. These reforms would also advance racial and gender equity, given that the caregiving workforce is disproportionately made up of Black women, other women of color and immigrants. Finally, such an investment would support people with disabilities, older adults and family caregivers with the supports they need to live with dignity in their communities.

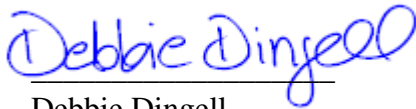
An essential HCBS workforce supports millions of older adults and people with disabilities to live in their own homes and communities. As you know, HCBS caregiving workers are often paid low wages and experience high rates of turnover that disrupts the continuity of care. Home

care workers are disproportionately women of color who have been placed at disproportionate risk in this crisis due to an unjust economic system and a patchwork care economy.

Additionally, many of these workers have been without basic personal protective equipment, timely COVID-19 testing, and enforceable safety standards as the pandemic continues to pose risks to their health and those they serve. These investments will provide direct support workers with the protections, compensation and essential benefits they deserve. By strengthening the workforce, your plan also will provide the reliable supports needed by people with disabilities and older adults who wish to remain in their homes and communities.

We commend your leadership in putting forward a plan to invest in the caregiving economy, support older adults and Americans with disabilities, and provide good-paying jobs to the workforce that serves them. We look forward to working with you to make these goals a reality.

Sincerely,



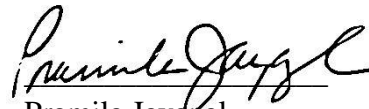
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