

# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS



815 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

JOHN J. SWEENEY  
PRESIDENT

RICHARD L. TRUMKA  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

ARLENE HOLT BAKER  
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

## **LEGISLATIVE ALERT!**

(202) 637-5057

January 27, 2009

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to vote for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (H.R. 1), which the House will consider later this week. Failure to enact an aggressive economic recovery package in a timely manner is simply not an option, given our dire economic circumstances, and this important legislation would be an essential first step towards rebuilding an economy that works for all Americans.

The U.S. economy shed more than 524,000 jobs during the month of December 2008, increasing the jobless rate to 7.2 percent, its highest level in 16 years. In total, 2.6 million jobs were lost in 2008, the largest annual job loss since 1945. According to the Economic Policy Institute, more than 5.5 million jobs are likely to be lost during this recession unless a major job-creating stimulus plan is enacted. Without immediate action, weaknesses in the labor market are likely to persist for another two to three years.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act would prevent the loss of millions of jobs and get our economy moving in the near term, while making needed investments to restore the ability of middle-income families to increase their income and build a decent future for their children.

This legislation contains \$550 billion in strategically targeted investments and another \$275 billion in targeted tax cuts that would spur economic recovery. It includes unprecedented accountability and transparency measures designed to ensure that tax dollars are being spent wisely and only for intended purposes.

The investment provisions of H.R. 1 are specifically targeted to create new jobs and keep workers from losing jobs they have now. Investments in infrastructure and energy would provide millions of good paying jobs that cannot be off-shored, while helping us move toward a cleaner, greener future. Investments in schools would help us educate our children and help struggling school districts make up for budget shortfalls caused by the collapse of their property tax base. States and localities would be better able to meet budgetary pressures caused by increasing demand on the important programs they administer.

We are now facing our greatest economic crisis since World War II. Our workforce is losing jobs at the rate of half a million every month, real wages have been stagnant for years, and the housing and financial markets are in crisis. Every week that goes by brings more bad economic news, and every week Congress fails to act puts our economic future at greater risk.

I urge you to vote for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (H.R. 1), because swift action is essential to halt the current economic decline, jumpstart growth, and put Americans back to work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Samuel', written in a cursive style.

William Samuel, Director  
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT