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Clarence E. Anthony

September 9, 2021

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Chairman
House Education and Labor Committee
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Scott,

On behalf of the National League of Cities (NLC), the nation's foremost resource and non-partisan advocate for municipal governments and their leaders, representing all of America's 19,000 cities, towns, and villages, I write today to thank you for your ongoing leadership and commitment to workers in our nation's communities. NLC has long called for a significant investment in workforce training for residents in our communities so they can fill jobs across infrastructure sectors that will be created by the historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and meet shifting business demands in other sectors. NLC strongly supports the Education and Labor Committee portion of the Build Back Better Act, which supports this investment.

As I know you understand, the U.S. invests less in workforce development than all other developed countries, except Mexico, and over the past two decades has cut investments by 40 percent. Congress must invest broadly, at-scale in skills-based training, including on-the-job training and apprenticeships, as well as in our nation's federal workforce development system to prepare workers to return to work in a post-COVID economy and be ready for the impact of automation, technology and AI on the workforce.

As Congress moves forward with the IIJA, which would add 2 million jobs per year over the course of the next decade to our nation's labor market, communities across America must ensure a trained, skilled workforce to fill these jobs. While millions of workers – particularly historically underserved workers of color, young people, women, and immigrants – have lost jobs that aren't coming back, an equitable recovery for these populations will be mostly served through the local workforce system and its stakeholders. Investments in our public workforce system, in industry and sector partnerships, in apprenticeship, adult education and career and technical education are critical to meeting workers' historic need and businesses' unprecedented demand in our nation's cities, towns and villages.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to ensure this legislation becomes law and these vital resources continue to help the people needing them the most. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Stephanie Martinez-Ruckman, Legislative Director, Human Development, at 202-626-3098 or martinez-ruckman@nlc.org, with any questions.

Sincerely,



Clarence E. Anthony
CEO and Executive Director