



BOB KING, President

DENNIS WILLIAMS, Secretary-Treasurer

VICE PRESIDENTS: JOE ASHTON • CINDY ESTRADA • GENERAL HOLIEFIELD • JIMMY SETTLES

IN REPLY REFER TO

October 20, 2011

1757 N STREET, N.W.
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Dear Senator:

The Senate is expected to take up S. 1723, the Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act, as early as this week. This bill would provide direct aid to local governments to retain and rehire teachers, police, fire fighters and emergency responders whose jobs have been cut or are threatened by reduced state and local government revenues. On behalf of one million active and retired UAW members, I urge you to vote for cloture and for final passage of this critically important piece of President Obama's American Jobs Act.

The Great Recession has taken a devastating toll on communities across the country, causing state and local budget shortfalls that have forced the layoffs of 300,000 teachers and tens of thousands of police and first responders. These layoffs have severely compromised the education of millions of children and the safety and security of countless communities. In combination with the loss of hundreds of thousands of other state and local government employees, these layoffs have also been a significant drag on the nation's economy.

The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act would go a long way toward alleviating this economic vicious cycle. It would provide \$30 billion in grants to states to avoid teacher and other school personnel layoffs in K-12 education and \$5 billion for a Community Oriented Policing Stabilization Fund to be used to hire, rehire, or retain career law enforcement officers, \$1 billion of which would be set aside for grants to support hiring rehiring, or retaining first responders. The grants would provide badly needed services to American communities and would serve to stimulate the economy at the same time.

Funding for these public safety and education jobs would come from a modest surtax on the very highest-earning Americans: a half of one percent on income over \$1 million a year. For someone earning \$1.1 million a year, the surtax would amount to only \$500. Yet this small surtax would enable more than 400,000 Americans to remain or become employed providing essential public services, would stabilize the budgets of state and local governments, and would benefit the nation by providing better public education and more secure local communities and by stimulating local economies.

Americans need jobs, and S. 1723 provides them. We urge to vote for cloture and for final passage of the Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act.

Sincerely,

Barbara Somson
Legislative Director

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