



April 1, 2021

The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer
Governor
State of Michigan
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Governor Whitmer,

As you know, on March 11, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package that brings much needed aide and support to communities and states across our nation.

According to a document prepared by the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP), Michigan stands to receive nearly \$6.6 billion dollars in state fiscal relief, \$4 billion dollars in local fiscal relief, \$3.814 billion in relief for K-12 schools, as well as, economic impact payments directly to individuals.

Additionally, the ARPA provides State and Local recovery funds for costs incurred through December 31, 2024.

As a statewide Union of more than 7,000 public employees, we are asking that you and your team make every effort to draw on the resources of the ARPA and utilize available funds to recognize and support the hard working men and women of Michigan.

Specifically, we are asking that the State do the following as allowed under the American Rescue Plan Act:

- (1) Provide premium pay (up to \$13 per hour in addition to base pay, up to a \$25,000 cap) to any state, territory, or tribal government workers who have and continue to perform essential work during the current public health crisis (defined as work needed to maintain continuity of operations of critical infrastructure and other sectors designated by state and local officials as critical to protect the health and well-being of residents).

- (2) As an employer, provide instruction and guidance to all State Employees and Departments concerning changes to Paid Sick Leave under the ARPA. This would include (1) the reset of the 10-day/80-hour limit for Paid Sick Leave starting April 1, 2021 for those employees who previously exhausted their entitlement to Paid Sick Leave under the FFCRA. (2) the addition of three qualifying reasons under the ARPA for Paid Sick Leave which are (a) obtaining a Covid-19 vaccine, (b) recovering from any illness or condition related to the COVID-19 vaccine or (c) seeking or awaiting the results of a COVID-19 diagnosis or test if either the employee has been exposed to COVID-19 or the employer requested the test or

diagnosis. These same instructions and guidance should be provided to all Michigan employers/employees along with information and resources to answer questions.

- (3) Develop a plan and strategy to maximize ARPA money for investments in water and sewer infrastructure.
- (4) Develop a plan and strategy to pull from the Emergency Connectivity Fund that provides \$7 billion to reimburse schools and libraries for providing free broadband service (and connected devices) to students and patrons at their homes. The money is available until 2030.
- (5) Develop a plan and strategy to pull from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund - \$123 billion to remain available through September 30, 2023, including \$800 million in grants to provide homeless children and youth with wraparound services and assistance to attend school and fully participate in school activities.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these requests and please feel free to reach out or have your staff call our office if you have any questions. While we understand COVID-19 is far from over, we appreciate your leadership during these difficult times and will continue doing the necessary work to keep Michigan moving forward.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Tripp". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "T".

Jeremy Tripp
Executive Director
SEIU Local 517M