

## **Build Back Better Act** *Investing in Students, Families, and Workers*

The Committee on Education and Labor's portion of the [Build Back Better Act](#) invests \$761 billion to lower costs for families, secure good-paying jobs for American workers, and set a strong foundation of America's children. These investments will:

- [Lower the cost of child care](#) and secure universal pre-K for three- and four-year-olds,
- [Lower the cost of higher education](#) by funding two years of tuition-free community college and increasing the value Pell Grants,
- [Strengthen our public schools](#) by helping school districts repair, modernize, or rebuild crumbling and outdated school buildings,
- [Help workers secure good-paying jobs](#) by expanding job training programs, and
- [Help prevent child hunger](#) by expanding our most effective child nutrition programs.

### [Affordable Child Care and Universal Pre-K](#)

The *Build Back Better Act* invests roughly \$450 billion in lowering the cost of child care and securing universal pre-K for three- and four-year-olds.

#### ***Lower the Cost of Child Care for Working Families***

Working families across the country are facing a child care crisis. The high cost of child care is straining family budgets and pushing millions of Americans out of the workforce – a majority of whom are women. The lack of affordable child care is also hurting our economy. As workers are forced to stay home, employers are struggling to fill job openings to meet demand and grow their businesses.

The *Build Back Better Act* makes a historic investment to lower the cost of child care for working families, expand the availability of high-quality child care, and raise wages for child care workers.

Through this investment:

- The vast majority of families would not pay more than seven percent of their income on child care, and
- Child care providers would have the resources to raise wages for child care workers and expand available supply to serve more children and families.

#### ***Secure Universal Pre-K for 3- and 4-Year Olds***

Early childhood education provides children and families the strong foundation they deserve. Yet, many families do not have access to participate in pre-K programs, and often communities do not have the resources to support universal pre-K programs.

The *Build Back Better Act* invests in securing universal pre-K for three- and four-year olds so that children can go on to live happier, healthier, and more productive lives. Through this investment:

- We will have free, universal, high-quality pre-k for three- and four-year-olds, and
- Communities will have the resources they need to provide safe and healthy environments for pre-K programs.

### [Lower the Cost of Higher Education](#)

Most jobs in the modern economy require some level of education past high school. Whether they choose to attend a community college or a four-year university, every American should have the opportunity to get the quality and affordable education they need to find a rewarding career.

*The Build Back Better Act* invests \$111 billion to lower the cost of higher education. This investment will:

- Provide two years of tuition-free community college,
- Lower the cost of higher education by increasing the value of the Pell Grants—the cornerstone of student financial aid,
- Invest in grant programs to help train new teachers and address the growing teacher shortage, and
- Make a quality degree more affordable through targeted investments in Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and other Minority-Serving Institutions.

### [Strengthen our Public School Infrastructure](#)

Even before the pandemic, chronic neglect of America’s public schools forced students and educators across the country to learn and work in outdated and hazardous school buildings. The average school building is roughly 45 years old. Investing in school infrastructure will allow school districts to repair, modernize, or rebuild crumbling and outdated school buildings.

*The Build Back Better Act* invests \$82 billion in America’s public school infrastructure.

This investment will:

- Allow school districts to repair, modernize, and rebuild crumbling and outdated school buildings, with funding targeted to schools with the greatest need, and
- Create more than 1 million good-paying jobs in communities across the country.

### [Help Workers Secure Good-Paying Jobs](#)

Public workforce development programs – including paid job training opportunities, career navigation services, and wraparound support like transportation – are a critical to help American workers secure good-paying jobs and provide employers the talent they need to succeed and grow. The pandemic has led millions of Americans to consider new careers in emerging and in-demand fields, and the investments in the bipartisan infrastructure bill will further increase the demand for skilled workers.

*The Build Back Better Act* invests nearly \$80 billion in workforce development programs that allow workers to build new skills while earning a paycheck.

This investment will:

- Expand Registered Apprenticeships and other paid job training programs that are targeted to serve at-risk young people, support workers who were laid off from their jobs, and create partnerships with

employers and labor unions in local communities to train workers to fill openings in high-wage occupations,

- Fund new workforce activities to fight climate change – carried out through both Department of Labor job training programs and AmeriCorps – to prepare workers for good-paying jobs in emerging fields to help address the climate crisis,
- Fund strategies to recruit and retain direct care workers, including raising wages and creating training opportunities to help address the direct care workforce shortage,
- Invest in increased enforcement of labor law and civil rights violations, and set meaningful civil monetary penalties for violations of wage and hour, worker safety and labor laws, and
- Provide assistance to states wanting to phase out subminimum wages for workers with disabilities.

### [Help Prevent Child Hunger](#)

Even before the pandemic, more than five million children lived in homes that did not have reliable access to nutritious food. This has a lasting impact on children’s physical health, mental health, and their education. Every child should have the basic nutrition they need for a healthy and happy childhood.

*The Build Back Better Act* invests nearly \$35 billion in proven child nutrition programs that will bolster the fight against child hunger.

This investment will:

- Allow nearly 9 million more children to receive free school meals by expanding eligibility and eliminating paperwork,
- Help more children get healthy nutrition over the summer for children by creating a nationwide program to provide Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT) benefits to eligible low-income children, and
- Provide funding to increase access to healthier foods by updating school kitchen equipment and investing in other health-focused nutrition programs.