

# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS



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## **LEGISLATIVE ALERT!**

(202) 637-5057

February 12, 2009

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to vote for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (H.R. 1). Failure to enact an economic recovery package is simply not an option. This important legislation is an essential first step towards rebuilding an economy that works for all Americans.

The Department of Labor has reported that the economy lost 598,000 non-farming jobs in January and the unemployment rate rose from 7.2 to 7.6 percent. Payroll employment has declined by 3.6 million jobs since the start of the recession in December 2007, with approximately one-half of this decline occurring in the past 3 months. The January job losses were large and widespread across nearly all sectors of the economy. Without immediate action, weaknesses in the labor market are likely to persist for another two to three years, or longer.

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 get support to help meet budgetary pressures caused by increasing demand on the important programs they administer.

The United States is losing jobs at the rate of more than 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,

William Samuel, Director  
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT