

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS



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LEGISLATIVE ALERT!

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April 29, 2008

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman, Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Howard P. "Buck" McKeon
Ranking Member, Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Miller and Ranking Member McKeon:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to support the Loeb sack-Kildee substitute amendment when the Education and Labor Committee marks up the 21st Century High-Performing Public School Facilities Act (H.R. 3021) on Wednesday, April 30.

We believe the health of our economy requires a substantial investment in the structural rehabilitation and renovation of our nation's public schools. This investment would result in the creation of jobs and economic activity, as well as help provide a safer, healthier, and modern learning environment that would enable children to thrive in the classroom.

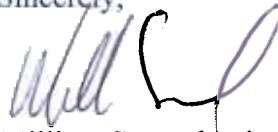
As states strive to meet new and higher education standards, we can no longer overlook the fact that a safe and modern learning environment is integral to raising student performance. Too many students today must learn—and too many teachers must teach—in overcrowded and aged school buildings. Under these conditions, teachers are struggling to meet the new expectations, making these goals even more difficult to achieve.

By providing \$6.4 billion of direct investment in critical school repairs, the legislation would stimulate local, state, and regional economic activity, while providing an enhanced learning environment for our teachers and schoolchildren. We know that investing resources in infrastructure projects such as school renovation creates immediate and tangible benefits. Studies have shown that over 40,000 jobs are created for every billion dollars invested in infrastructure spending, meaning the Loeb sack-Kildee substitute could help create hundreds of thousands of jobs in the construction industry alone.

The Loeb sack-Kildee substitute would also encourage energy efficiency and the use of renewable resources in schools by requiring that funds be used for projects that meet one of three widely recognized green building standards. However, the legislation also provides flexibility by allowing school districts to waive the green building requirements in circumstances that make the requirements impracticable, while ensuring that at least 90 percent of funds are used for green projects by 2013.

The AFL-CIO urges the committee to approve the Loeb sack-Kildee substitute amendment, and H.R. 3021 as amended.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William Samuel", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

William Samuel, Director
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

c: All members of the House Committee on Education and Labor