



February 26, 2021

Dear Representative:

As National President of the National Treasury Employees Union, representing approximately 150,000 federal employees in 34 agencies, I am writing to urge your support for the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, H.R. 1319. Among other things, this bill would aid federal employees during this pandemic by providing COVID-related emergency paid leave for civilian federal employees and ensure that federal employees who came into contact with the public or co-workers in the course of their duties who are then diagnosed with COVID-19 are presumed to have a work-related illness for purposes of eligibility for workers' compensation.

This is a critical time in the battle to reduce the spread of COVID. Social distancing remains one of the best ways to prevent the spread of the virus and federal employees, along with the rest of America's workforce, need to be able to stay home when they have contact with someone who has tested positive, tested positive themselves, or need to care for loved ones. Although Congress provided federal workers two weeks of emergency sick leave last year, it expired in December and federal employees were omitted from coverage by the COVID-related paid family and medical leave provisions provided to the private sector. The paid leave provisions in this bill will ensure that employees have the leave they need when they need to quarantine and when they or a loved one are exposed to or test positive for the virus.

In addition, many federal employees have been working at their job sites throughout this pandemic as their work is not portable. And for many of these individuals, social distancing is difficult due to the nature of their work. It is imperative that these workers be provided workers' compensation protection. The presumption of workplace illness included in this bill will make sure federal employees exposed to the public or coworkers in the workplace who are diagnosed with COVID-19 will be eligible for Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) benefits.

Federal workers have continued to provide service to our country during this time of crisis, putting themselves and their families at risk. I urge you to provide them the tools necessary to continue to do their jobs safely and vote for passage of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony M. Reardon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anthony" and last name "Reardon" clearly visible.

Anthony M. Reardon  
National President