



A Union of Professionals

Healthcare Workers: Biden's American Rescue Plan and Investments in Infrastructure and Jobs

President Joe Biden signed the American Rescue Plan into law on March 11, 2021. One year later, we are continuing to see and feel the results across our communities.

Biden's American Rescue Plan has delivered relief to our nurses and healthcare professionals, provided funding for new healthcare and health access initiatives, and lowered health insurance premiums for millions. The package included funding to help our early childhood, K-12 and higher education institutions address learning, implement COVID-19 safety measures, and otherwise work to support students and staff by making education safe. It allowed all students to have access to school meals, regardless of whether they were attending in person or remotely. Biden's plan invested in COVID-19 testing, tracing, research, and vaccine deployment. The vast majority of Americans received stimulus checks to help ease the pandemic's economic burden. And it doesn't stop there: Biden's American Rescue Plan also provided billions of dollars in child care relief for families, housing assistance, broadband, workforce development and more.

It is clear that elections matter; we know that when we show up and vote, our elected leaders will have our backs. On Nov. 15, 2021, Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to create jobs and rebuild our infrastructure. We have seen how Biden's American Rescue Plan and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act have helped ensure an equitable recovery over the last year, but we know we must keep showing up and push Congress to continue these programs that are a lifeline for millions of Americans.

Under the American Rescue Plan:

Families across America have **saved 40 percent off** their monthly health premiums.

Costs for Affordable Care Act health insurance were lowered, **and 4.5 million** more people got healthcare.

States received **more money for Medicaid** to reduce waiting lists.

State and local governments **received \$350 billion** in flexible grants to respond to COVID-19.

164 million people received direct stimulus payments of **up to \$1,400**.

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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Immediate needs from the pandemic and an impending economic recession were addressed by **investments, and expanding social infrastructure** kept Americans from poverty in 2021, showcasing the power of equitable public investment, which included:

- Child tax credits;
- Unemployment insurance; and
- Food assistance.

The child tax credits provided a tax cut to more than **36 million households** with nearly 90 percent of children in the United States, **cutting the child poverty rate in half**.

According to Moody's Analytics, the American Rescue Plan was responsible for:

- 4 million additional jobs;
- A 2 percent lower unemployment rate;
- A 5.7 percent increase in economic growth; and
- Preventing a double-dip recession in the spring of 2021.

Under Biden's Infrastructure Plan:

\$140 million in grants was provided to address the **mental health needs of healthcare workers**.

\$200 million was provided for the Nurse Corps Program, which repays up to 85 percent of unpaid **nursing education debt** for eligible nurses working in critical shortage facilities, in addition to providing scholarships for nursing students committed to working in these facilities.

\$100 million was provided for the **Medical Reserve Corps**, a national volunteer network of health professionals and others who assist in response to natural and public health disasters.

\$800 million was provided for **the National Health Service Corps**, which provides loan forgiveness and scholarships to primary care health clinicians serving in areas with health professional shortages.