

# The Families First Coronavirus Response Act



*Great Public Schools for Every Student*

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The House of Representatives passed, by a vote of 363–40, the NEA-supported **Families First Coronavirus Response Act, H.R. 6201**, on March 14. The Senate passed it 90 – 8 on March 18. It is a good *initial* step, along with the \$8 billion passed earlier this month, to help during this crisis. NEA is urging Congress to take additional steps after passage of H.R. 6201. See those asks [here](#).

## CORONAVIRUS TESTING

- ▶ The Families First Coronavirus Response Act makes free coronavirus testing available for everyone who needs a test, including the uninsured.

## PAID EMERGENCY SICK LEAVE

- ▶ Under the legislation, two weeks’ paid emergency sick leave will be available for those who are sick or quarantined or caring for others, or in the event of school and childcare facility closures.
  - Full-time employees are entitled to 10 days and part-time employees are entitled to the typical number of hours that they work in a typical two-week period.
  - Aid will be at two-thirds the employee’s regular rate to care for a family member under the circumstances noted above.

## PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

- ▶ Paid family and medical leave will be provided to those who have been on the job for at least 30 days, to be used for any of the following reasons:
  - To adhere to a requirement or recommendation to quarantine due to exposure to or symptoms of coronavirus; and,
  - To care for a child of an employee if the child’s school or place of care has been closed, or the childcare provider is unavailable, due to a coronavirus.

## FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVES

- ▶ H.R. 6201 strengthens the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other programs that provide nutritional meals to those in need.
  - The legislation allots \$500 million for WIC to provide nutritious foods to low-income pregnant women or mothers with young children, should the women lose their jobs due to the COVID-19 emergency.

- The legislation enables the Department of Agriculture to approve state plans for providing emergency SNAP assistance to families with children who would have received free or reduced-price school meals if the COVID-19 emergency had not closed their schools.
- The legislation enables Department of Agriculture to issue nationwide school meal waivers, eliminating paperwork for states and increasing schools' flexibility.
- The legislation allows child and adult care centers to operate as feeding sites and waive all meal pattern requirements if COVID-19 disrupts the food supply.
- Special waivers for SNAP emergency benefits will be provided, removing all work and work-training requirements previously part of SNAP.

## **MEDICAID**

- ▶ Federal funds for Medicaid will be increased by approximately \$36 billion to assist states facing higher Medicaid costs.

## **ENHANCED UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

- ▶ Emergency grants totaling \$1 billion will be provided to states in 2020 for activities related to processing and paying unemployment insurance benefits, extending protections to furloughed workers.