

YOUNG INVINCIBLES

March 19, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

On behalf of Young Invincibles (YI), a national organization dedicated to amplifying the voice of young adults and expanding their economic opportunity, I write to express our strong support for the below policy recommendations in any subsequent legislative stimulus package to combat the impact of COVID-19.

We are in the midst of unprecedented times, yet we know from the Great Recession that young people, and low-income young people in particular, are most at risk. The last recession cost young workers more than \$22,000 in lost earnings. More than six years after the crash, young college graduates who took on debt still had negative average net wealth. Young adults' chances at home ownership, retirement savings, childrens' college funds, and broader financial security have been permanently damaged.

Young Invincibles is eager to continue fighting for expanded economic opportunities for 18-35 year olds, both nationally and regionally.

- Expand the Medicaid expansion federal match to 100% for the 14 states that have not yet expanded their Medicaid programs. Given the likelihood of an economic downturn, the number of uninsured and uncompensated care will increase, further exacerbating an already strained health care system.
- Protect patients by ending surprise billing in all health care settings, including air and ground ambulances. Ending surprise billing practices will not only help patients who may need treatment for COVID-19 and fear an unexpected cost, but millions more who are at risk of unaffordable medical bills.

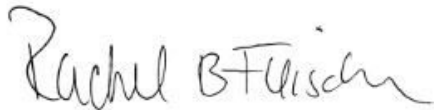
- Include health extenders funding for community health centers, public hospitals, mental health facilities and other programs. The health extenders package set to expire May 22 should be included now in any COVID-19 relief package.
- Expand ACA subsidies beyond 400% FPL for all marketplace enrollees, and consider codifying CSRs to continue to expand help covering out of pocket costs. By codifying CSRs, silver-loading should be taken into account to ensure payments are offset to provide immediate relief to all consumers.
- Provide \$5 billion in Emergency Homeless Assistance. This funding would enable state and local governments to finance housing and health related services including by paying for emergency use of hotels and motels, for the hundreds of thousands of people currently experiencing homelessness, and as a result, are at greater risk of contracting the disease.
- Suspend the work and community service requirements in federal housing programs. This provision would suspend the work and community service requirements in Federal housing programs for the duration of the crisis to ensure residents do not feel compelled to go to work or participate in other activities to keep their housing.
- Cover required student loan payments for any borrower experiencing financial hardship. The administration's proposed suspension of interest accrual for federal loans will have a long-term benefit by reducing time to repayment but will have little benefit for borrowers who need more cash in their pockets now to meet basic living expenses. Lifting the burden of student loan debt and reducing their overall debt levels through this crisis and until borrowers have time to regain solid financial footing will enable them to meet present needs and remain active in the economy. Provisions should be put in place to keep borrowers in Public Service Loan Forgiveness and income-driven repayment plans on track. Private loan providers should suspend required payments, as well.
- Allow for direct emergency funds to cover basic needs. Many students struggle to cover costs for food, housing, transportation, and child care, even before the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent campus closures. Congress should consider ways to support students through emergency aid, such as allowing institutions to directly provide resources to students.
- Prohibit debt collection, repossession, and garnishment of wages during the pandemic. This provision would ban the collection of all consumer debt, including medical debt, and prohibit the garnishment of wages or repossession of assets during the pandemic, and for 120 days after the pandemic ends.
- Preserve Pell Grant support for low- and middle-income students. Congress should protect students whose colleges have shut down because of the outbreak do not suffer

financial harm by having to pay back Pell funds from a semester cut short, and make clear that usage of Pell in any semester where a student is impacted by COVID-19 should not count toward a student's lifetime eligibility.

- Ensure no penalty to a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress status. Students' class and instruction time will likely dip over the next few weeks or months. Congress should consider allowing for flexibility in students' ability to access Title IV if they dip below satisfactory academic progress requirements.

We look forward to continuing our work with your leadership office during this economic crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel B. Fleischer".

Rachel Fleischer
Executive Director