



815 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

RICHARD L. TRUMKA  
PRESIDENT

ELIZABETH H. SHULER  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

ARLENE HOLT BAKER  
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

## **LEGISLATIVE ALERT!**

(202) 637-5057



October 21, 2011

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I am writing to urge you to vote for cloture on the Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act (S. 1723). S. 1723 would provide \$30 billion to help state and local governments keep nearly 400,000 teachers on the job and \$5 billion to retain and rehire police, firefighters, and first responders.

Since the start of the recession, state budgets have suffered the largest budget shortfalls on record. State and local governments have shed nearly 600,000 jobs, including nearly 300,000 education jobs and 15,000 firefighters. Larger class sizes, longer emergency response times, and increases in crime have been the inevitable result of these cutbacks. Month after month, we have seen the continuing loss of state and local employees nearly wiping out the small employment gains made in the private sector.

The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act would be paid for with a 0.5 percent surtax on modified adjusted gross income in excess of \$1 million, a tax that would affect fewer than 1 percent of the richest U.S. families.

In a recent Gallup poll, spending federal money to keep teachers and first-responders employed was backed by 75 percent of respondents. In fact, the most recent CNN poll shows that 63 percent of Republicans support providing federal funds to help communities hire teachers and first responders.

With millions of Americans unemployed or underemployed, it is critical that the Senate stop playing partisan games and pass the Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director  
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT