



NOVA Back to Work  
Leadership Task Force

7900 Westpark Drive  
Suite A550  
Tysons, VA 22102-3853

Direct: (703) 752-7508

Northern Virginia Chamber of  
Commerce

Northern Virginia Community  
College

George Mason University

GO Virginia Region 7

Northern Virginia Economic  
Development Alliance

Arlington Chamber of  
Commerce

Dulles Regional Chamber of  
Commerce

Loudoun County Chamber of  
Commerce

Prince William Chamber of  
Commerce

Greater Reston Chamber of  
Commerce

April 27, 2020

The Honorable Timothy Kaine  
United States Senate  
231 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner  
United States Senate  
703 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Donald Beyer  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1119 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gerald Connolly  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2238 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jennifer Wexton  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1217 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rob Wittman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2055 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Northern Virginia Representative:

We write to you today as the newly formed Northern Virginia Back to Work Leadership Task Force. Our organizations each play a critical role in creating, attracting and retaining our world class workforce.

We applaud your efforts in the multiple rounds of legislation to help our country navigate uncharted territory during the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate the investments these bills have made in higher education, the workforce, and direct support for small and large businesses affected by the crisis.

We understand that the fourth round of stimulus is expected to be negotiated over the coming weeks. To that end, we respectfully ask you consider addressing the following priorities:

1. Support direct aid to higher education as well as K-12. This support should be provided with maximum flexibility for institutions that remain operating during this crisis. These institutions have dedicated significant resources to new priorities like transitioning to distance learning while at the same time experiencing a severe decline in revenue. They will also need to begin preparing for the summer and fall terms. Higher education is a major employer in Northern Virginia and the Commonwealth and should be considered for inclusion in federal efforts to avert layoffs.

2. Allow maximum flexibility for state and local governments to use CARES Act and future stimulus funding to meet their needs. The COVID-19 crisis will have different effects on state and local budgets. Those leaders need to be able to use federal support to meet their specific needs, not based on one-size, fits-all rules.
3. Support the Virginia Community Colleges' (VCCS) request to make Pell grants available to individuals pursuing short-term workforce training. For those experiencing job loss as a result of the economic crisis, their ability to quickly get retrained and rehired will be critical to getting our economy running again. Pell grants would provide a useful tool to support those who seek help through local workforce boards.
4. Increase funding for Labor's WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker program. A substantial infusion of Labor's WIA Formula funding (40 percent) provided in 2009 by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act provided critical resources for retraining and reemployment to Northern Virginia jobseekers. We know a similar if not larger increase now would provide a necessary lifeline to the tens of thousands of Virginia jobseekers who have lost their job because of the crisis.
5. Increased funding for the deployment of rural broadband in Virginia. Educational institutions and other workforce training providers have been making the transition to distance learning over the past few weeks. It is critical that government support these efforts by ensuring students and job seekers can access these online resources.

The Back to Work Leadership Task Force understands that the impacts of the COVID-19 health and economic crisis will be felt for a long time. Our organizations are engaged on multiple fronts to help prepare our communities for the next phase in recovery as the future becomes clearer. Please continue to work with Back to Work as you look for ways to prepare for the gradual reopening of our economy.

Thank you for all you have done to listen to the business community during this unprecedented health and economic crisis. We look forward to working with you in the weeks and months ahead. Together, we can put Virginians Back to Work.

Sincerely,



Todd W. Rowley  
 Chairman, Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce  
 Market Executive, Old Dominion National Bank  
 Board Member of NOVA, GO Virginia, Va. Career Works

[SIGNATURE]

Hon. Tom Rust  
 Chair  
 GO Virginia Region 7



Anne Kress  
 President  
 Northern Virginia Community College



Stephanie Landrum  
 Chair  
 Northern Virginia Economic Development  
 Alliance



Anne Holton  
 Interim President  
 George Mason University



Kate Bates  
 President and CEO  
 Arlington Chamber of Commerce



John Boylan  
President and CEO  
Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce



Charles Kapur  
President and CEO  
Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce



Tony Howard  
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Debbie Jones  
President and CEO  
Prince William Chamber of Commerce