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Colleagues,

On Wednesday evening, thousands of our local, state, and national leaders joined me, Governor Gretchen Whitmer, and Congressperson Rosa DeLauro as we kicked off a national call to action. Our members have been loud and clear that the number one thing that NEA can do is to advocate for additional federal resources for our students and their educators. We hear you. We believe to our core that the best people to advocate for these resources are educators, and we need them to join the fight. **Join us in demanding that Congress act now to provide \$175 billion dollars so that our students and educators have the resources they need to succeed.** We need to build bridges for educational opportunity for students and stronger communities, and we need to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of students and educators. These are our demands to Congress, and we will not back down.

You may ask, why now? Just yesterday, Governor DeWine and the Ohio Legislature moved legislation forward that would rip \$465 million in desperately needed funds out of Ohio's education institutions. At a time when students will need these funds more than ever, their futures are being compromised while states and the federal government hand bailouts and tax cuts to corporate America, millionaires, and billionaires. We cannot be silent. It has been said that you can define how well a democracy is doing by how it treats its children. Our democracy needs the inspiration and voices of our members. **It needs all of us and the time to act is now.** This is where I need your help, and what I need you to do:

1. Drive turnout to our grassroots Tele-Town Hall on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 7pm EDT. You and your members can register by [clicking here](#). You can use this same [link](#) for social media.
1. Congress needs to hear the voices of our members. Please share as widely as possible [this link here](#) that will allow our members to send emails and letters to their members of congress. We believe we need a minimum of 250,000 congressional contacts to ensure our demands are met.

1. As part of a coordinated earned media strategy, schedule statewide Virtual Events, like RedForEd Rallies and Facebook Live during the week of May 18<sup>th</sup>. NEA will be curating resources to support these events and will share with affiliates next week.
1. Ask local school boards to pass resolutions supporting our demands. Ensure these districts who pass resolutions send them on to their congressional delegation. A model school board resolution will be shared with all participants following the Tele-Town Hall on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>.
1. Schedule 1-2 additional state member Tele-Town Halls with Members of Congress during the month of May. Ask members to share stories about the potential impact in their classroom or worksite if Congress fails to act. Push for commitments from your Members of Congress.

My union sisters and brothers, I know this is a lot ask. But in unprecedented times we need to take unprecedented action! The biggest asset we have is our 3 million members and it is time to mobilize them to action. Rest assured NEA is not expecting you to do all of the above on your own. We have prioritized this work and we here to help. If there is anything you need to execute what we described above, please reach out to your Zone Director to coordinate assistance.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, “Unity to be real must stand the severest strain without breaking.” Without a doubt we are all straining, we are all stretched thin, but we can’t stop. Our students’ futures depend on us taking action in this moment. Our members need to understand and realize the power we have as a union---if we exercise it. It is time for Congress to hear us roar in unity!

In Solidarity,

Lily



