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July 20, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
H-204 U.S. Capitol  
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-211 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

The United States is in the midst of the most serious economic and public health crisis of the century. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report over 3.7 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States and that, to date, nearly 140,000 Americans have tragically lost their lives from the virus.<sup>1</sup> This pandemic has not spared the livelihoods of the American people, either. At present, more than 17.8 million Americans are out of work.<sup>2</sup> Our nation's youth unemployment rate stands at 20 percent, nearly double the national rate.<sup>3</sup>

In the face of such adversity, our nation has a strong history of answering the call to service. Nearly a century ago, President Franklin D. Roosevelt mobilized the strength and resolve of the American people during the Great Depression through creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Works Progress Administration (WPA). The legacy of their works can still be seen today in our national parks, roads, bridges, hiking trails, residential parks, and public spaces.

Today, the Corporation for National and Community Service – through AmeriCorps, SeniorCorps, and the National Civilian Community Corps – continues the proud American tradition of national service. Across the

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), Cases in the U.S. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html>

<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, The Employment Situation – June 2020 <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Statista, Monthly Youth Unemployment, June 2020 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/217448/seasonally-adjusted-monthly-youth-unemployment-rate-in-the-us/>

United States, selfless Americans, young and old, are helping rural and urban communities meet their educational, economic, and nutritional needs during this time of unprecedented national crisis.

In response, Congress must be bold and invest in our nation's fighting spirit. Already, both chambers of Congress have introduced strong bipartisan proposals which would hire thousands of young American volunteers and marshal their strength and passion toward meeting the public health, educational, nutritional, and workforce challenges presented by COVID-19 and its impact on our nation's economy.<sup>4</sup> As House and Senate leaders discuss which priorities to include in future COVID-19 pandemic relief legislation, I urge that funding to the Corporation for National and Community Service for these purposes be considered and included.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress

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<sup>4</sup> H.R. 6702, the Pandemic Response and Opportunity Through National Service Act & S.3964, the Cultivating Opportunity and Response to the Pandemic through Service (CORPS) Act.