



April 14, 2021

Speaker Ron Mariano
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Speaker Mariano:

As the process of deliberation begins in earnest over the \$4.55 billion coming to Massachusetts under the American Rescue Plan, I write to urge you and your colleagues to keep our public employees front and center in those deliberations.

State Employees have been on the front lines of the pandemic, working to keep the Commonwealth running for more than a year. Time and again, NAGE members and other union workers have showed up, sometimes at great risk to themselves and their families, in order to continue providing the public services so critical to withstanding the pandemic. From UI claims processors working round the clock in their own homes to deliver much needed emergency funds to families, RMV clerks in public-facing roles working to ensure that public safety was preserved, to commerce being continued in the face of great challenges, our members have kept Massachusetts running.

One year ago, the economic condition of the Commonwealth was tenuous. Today, growing economic evidence, supported by strong data, suggests that Massachusetts has weathered the fiscal storm and will emerge from the pandemic in a strong position to meet the challenges of tomorrow. To date, tax revenues are nearly \$1.4 Billion above the original benchmark, and the State is earmarked to receive \$4.55 Billion in state aid alone, on top of more than \$3 Billion for cities and towns from the American Rescue Plan.

Governor Baker's response to state employees, who have now been working for nearly a year without a contract, has been silence. So far, the Governor has chosen to reward the state employees who have helped keep the Commonwealth running by offering them nothing. Since late February, all we hear from the Administration is "we're working on it," without the slightest indication of what "it" is. Our members and their families deserve better; they deserve a boss who will have their back, especially after the year that our members endured.

As household income in Massachusetts rises, Governor Baker has opted to leave his workers and their families behind. We encourage the Governor to bargain in good faith and make an economic offer that is worthy of our state workforce, and we welcome your support in urging the Governor to do so. If the Governor fails in his obligation to bargain a reasonable raise, we will look to your leadership to ensure that state employees receive a fair wage increase, notwithstanding Governor Baker's desire to do nothing.

We will not sit silently by as the Governor allows his workforce to be left behind as we emerge from the pandemic and begin recovery. Our workers deserve fairness and equity, and we know that we have strong allies in the legislature that can help amplify that message and ensure that our members and their families are treated fairly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David J. Holway".

David J. Holway
National President

CC: Governor Baker, Secretary Heffernan, Members of the House

