

May 10, 2021

The Honorable Jim Stamas
Michigan Senate
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909

The Honorable Thomas Albert
Michigan House of Representatives
351 Capitol Building
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Senator Stamas and Representative Albert:

The Detroit Regional Chamber applauds your leadership in proposing a \$400 million return-to-work grant program to encourage workers to reenter the workforce. The Chamber's membership representing all sectors of the economy has been clear; securing employees to fill growing customer demand has become a critical issue.

The Chamber is supportive of the fundamental principles in your plan and suggest some additional provisions to further incent both employees and employers. Building on your proposal, the Chamber developed the following outline, tentatively named "100K by Labor Day Back to Work Plan", which we estimate to cost approximately \$400 million of one-time American Rescue Plan funds, the same as you proposed. Our suggestions include:

- **\$2,000 return-to-work grant per returning/new employee:** One-time grant, receivable upon 60 days of employment. (ARP funds: \$200 million.)
- **\$1,000 training grant to employers per returning/new employee:** For employer use to provide training or an additional signing bonus, contingent upon eligible employee(s) remaining on the job for 60 days. (ARP funds: \$100 million.)
- **\$100 vaccine incentive for employers:** Support employers covering costs associated with vaccine incentivization or compensating paid time off for employees getting vaccinated. Capping the program at \$100 million could encourage one million Michiganders to get vaccinated. (ARP funds: \$100 million.)

All proposed incentives would expire on Labor Day 2021 or when funds are depleted, whichever comes first.

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In addition, the Chamber supports your efforts to replenish the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) Compensation Fund without taxing employers by dedicating \$150 million of American Rescue Plan funds for this purpose.

Many elements of Michigan's economy have struggled over the past year, but signs for a strong rebound are evident. Ensuring job creators have the talented people needed to meet consumer demand and accelerate Michigan's economic recovery is a goal we share. Building on your strong proposal, the Chamber believes a bipartisan solution to accelerate employment growth, economic growth, support vaccine efforts, and replenish our UIA Fund is possible. The Chamber looks forward to working with you to take this positive step for Michigan's businesses and their employees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sandy K. Baruah', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Sandy K. Baruah
President and Chief Executive Officer
Detroit Regional Chamber

cc: The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer