

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock
GOVERNOR



Mike Cooney
LT. GOVERNOR

September 7, 2020

The Honorable Steve Daines
United States Senator, State of Montana
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Daines,

On this Labor Day, we are reminded that Montana is a state built by workers and Montana's success is thanks to the hard-working people of our state. Yet in these challenging times, celebrating our workers is not enough.

As you head back to Washington, D.C this week to serve the people of Montana, it is more important than ever for the Senate to pass critical relief that will boost working Americans and those needing immediate help the most right now. What better way to honor the contributions of the workers of Montana than to take action on the issues that the Senate has set to the side for months.

While Montana still has some of the lowest numbers of positive coronavirus cases per capita and the sixth lowest unemployment rate in the nation, there is still more to do to support our workforce. Montanans are looking to Washington for sustainable, long term solutions.

What is not sustainable is any policy that threatens the long-term viability of Medicare and Social Security for working Montanans. I, and the Montanans who rely on Social Security and Medicare, was concerned to hear about your support for a misguided plan that could [deprive](#) these programs of hundreds of billions of dollars. Montanans have taken notice of your support for cutting the payroll tax since the President first proposed it back in March, which is all the more striking, given that many of your Republican colleagues have been vocal in their opposition to this irresponsible proposal.

Congress should focus on targeted relief for the workers who have lost their jobs and the small businesses who continue to struggle with the impact COVID-19 has had on our economy. Suspending the payroll tax would fail to adequately help these groups while endangering critical benefits for our seniors and Montanans who will depend on these programs when they retire.

The workforce of our state needs stability as we continue to get workers back on their feet and back to work, but your proposal would do little for the Montanans most affected by this pandemic, while gutting funding for critical and lifesaving programs for our seniors. I urge you to pursue another route to ensure that we provide real help to Montana's workers, families, and small businesses — not deliver a "[windfall](#)" for the wealthy.

Montana's workers shouldn't be left high and dry as they weather through the unprecedented challenges facing our state and nation. At the state level, we have made sure our workers can continue putting dollars into the economy, prioritized public health so that businesses can remain open, and distributed money and personal protective equipment to our schools to help them safely reopen so that parents can be at work.

It's time for Congress to do its job and fight for working people.

Sincerely,



STEVE BULLOCK
Governor