

Youth-focused organizations applaud the Biden-Harris Administration commitment to funding youth workforce development with major American Rescue Plan announcement.



Washington, DC, September 2—Earlier this summer, the Biden-Harris Administration invited a coalition of youth and young adult facing organizations to participate in a roundtable on youth employment as part of the Administration’s [comprehensive strategy to respond to violence and ensure public safety](#). The Administration’s proposals to invest significant resources in youth employment and evidence-based community violence interventions through the [Build Back Better Plan](#) represent a long-overdue shift in how our nation responds to violence and must be advanced.

“Gun violence is now the number one cause of death for youth in America and a public health crisis that requires a comprehensive strategy. We applaud the White House’s leadership to push for American Rescue Plan funds to be used to provide workforce opportunities for youth most vulnerable to gun violence across the country, and we now call on our state leaders to fund these life-saving efforts.” - Gregory Jackson Jr., Executive Director of the Community Justice Action Fund.

“We are pleased to see the administration explicitly call for investments in economic opportunity for young people and look forward to working with policymakers to ensure these resources are directed to those who need it. This is about combatting centuries of divestment of communities of color and a critical first step in advancing racial and economic justice.” - Duy Pham, policy analyst, Center for Law and Social Policy.

For too long, our nation has failed to address the root causes of violence—systemic racism and poverty—and instead has poured billions of dollars into oppressive systems that have only exacerbated a cycle of violence and inequality. While there is much more work to do to dismantle these oppressive systems, it is



critical that Congress moves quickly to advance the Build Back Better agenda to ensure youth and young adults who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and systemic inequality are able to receive the resources they need.

“Young people at every intersection deserve safe, healthy, and hopeful communities where they can learn, dream, and thrive. Local government has a unique moment with the support of the Build Back Better agenda to reimagine public safety by investing in rich robust opportunities for young people to choose the future they want to see for themselves and their communities.” - Rachel M. Askew, Associate of Young Leader Programming, Cities United

As a diverse coalition of organizations representing a wide range of youth and young adult experiences, we are pleased with the Administration’s initial efforts calling for a historic investment in young people, particularly among young people who have been historically excluded from economic opportunity, including opportunity youth, foster youth, youth of color, youth experiencing homelessness, and young people impacted by the criminal legal system.

“No young person in America should spend one day homeless. We applaud that this administration’s Build Back Better agenda includes significant investments in youth who have been historically and systematically excluded. These investments in youth employment are long overdue and are a critical component to a comprehensive approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.” - Darla Bardine, Executive Director, National Network for Youth

This statement can be attributed to the following organizations that were represented at a roundtable with Senior Advisor to the President and Director of the Office of Public Engagement Cedric Richmond, Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs Julie Rodriguez, and Pronita Gupta of the Domestic Policy Council:

***Community Justice Action Fund
National Youth Employment Coalition
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
A New Deal for Youth
National Network for Youth
March for Our Lives
National Foster Youth Institute
Cities United
SchoolHouse Connection***