

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

July 8, 2019

The Honorable Richard Neal, Chair
The Honorable Kevin Brady, Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady,

The AFL-CIO is pleased that this week your Committee is taking the first step towards enactment of legislation to address our nation's looming pension crisis by marking-up H.R. 397, the "Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act."

Absent federal action, the retirement income security of over one million American workers, retirees, and pension beneficiaries across the country will be in jeopardy because of the impending failure of their multiemployer pension plans. By establishing a federal loan program for troubled plans meeting certain criteria, H.R. 397 reflects the fact that allowing these plans to fail will have a devastating impact not only on individuals, but also on numerous companies, and the communities in which plan participants, retirees and beneficiaries reside.

The working men and women whose retirement income security is at risk have not forgotten the 2008 record-setting federal rescue that provided hundreds of billions of dollars to troubled financial firms. They are no less worthy than J.P. Morgan Chase or Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, who were the beneficiaries of that federal support. Indeed, unlike those entities, they played no part in creating the problem. Indeed, in collective bargaining they frequently decided to forgo wage increases in favor of putting money into their pensions.

Congress has the ability to avert the impending retirement security crisis if it acts expeditiously. The "Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act" is important legislation because it focuses attention on the crisis and offers a solution. On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I hope it will have the support of all members of your Committee.

Sincerely,



William Samuel, Director
Government Affairs Department

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

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