

## ***The American Rescue Plan to Fund Vaccinations, Provide Immediate, Direct Relief to Working Families Bearing the Brunt of the COVID-19 Crisis, and Support Struggling Communities***

The COVID-19 pandemic and the corresponding economic crisis are devastating families across the country. While Congress's bipartisan action in December was a step in the right direction, it was only a down payment. We are in a race against time, and without additional government assistance, the economic and public health crises could worsen in the months ahead, schools will not be able to safely reopen, and vaccinations will remain far too slow.

Today, President-elect Biden is announcing a historic emergency legislative package to change the course of the pandemic, deliver immediate relief for hard-hit families, build a bridge towards economic recovery, and cut child poverty in half.

### **Mount a national vaccination program, contain COVID-19, and safely reopen schools.**

President-elect Biden will put forward a comprehensive plan to deal with this crisis and launch a whole-of-government COVID-19 response plan that will change the course of the pandemic.

President-elect Biden is asking Congress to put over \$400 billion toward critical measures to change the course of the pandemic. President-elect Biden's plan will:

- Invest \$160 billion to provide the supplies, emergency response, testing, and public health workforce that the country needs to stop the spread of COVID-19 while distributing vaccines as quickly as possible.
- Provide \$130 billion -- supplemented by additional state and local relief -- to help schools serve all students, no matter where they are learning, and help achieve President-elect Biden's goal to open the majority of K-8 schools within the first 100 days of his Administration.
- Provide up to 106 million more Americans with 14 weeks of emergency paid family and medical leave.

**Deliver immediate relief to working families bearing the brunt of this crisis.** Unemployment for workers making less than \$40,000 per year is at depression levels, and historic numbers of Americans are food and housing insecure. President-elect Biden will devote about \$1 trillion towards building a bridge to economic recovery for working families and. President-elect Biden's plan will:

- Give working families a \$1,400 per-person check, bringing their total relief payment from this and the December down payment to the \$2,000 it should've been from the start.
- Extend current unemployment insurance benefits and eligibility and provide a \$400 supplement until the end of September.
- Provide an additional \$35 billion in rental, homelessness, and utility assistance.
- Extend the 15 percent Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit increase, while temporarily cutting the state match; invest \$3 billion to help women, infants and children get the food they need; partner with restaurants to feed American families and keep restaurant workers on the job at the same time; and provide U.S. Territories with \$1 billion in additional nutrition assistance funding.

- Raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour, and end the tipped minimum wage and sub-minimum wage for people with disabilities.
- Call on employers to meet their obligations to frontline essential workers and provide back hazard pay.
- Expand child care assistance, help hard-hit child care providers cover their costs, and increase tax credits to help cover the cost of childcare.
- Increase the Child Tax Credit to \$3,000 per child (\$3,600 for a child under age 6) and make 17 year-olds qualifying children for the year.
- Raise the maximum Earned Income Tax Credit for childless adults from roughly \$530 to close to \$1,500, raise the income limit for the credit from about \$16,000 to about \$21,000, and eliminate the age cap for older workers.
- Provide an additional \$1 billion for states to cover the additional cash assistance that Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients needed as a result of the crisis.
- Ensure access to health coverage by subsidizing continuation health coverage (COBRA) and lower or eliminate health insurance premiums.
- Invest \$4 billion to expand access to behavioral health services.
- Request an additional \$20 billion to ensure adequate funding for veterans' health.
- Allocates \$800 million for federal programs that protect survivors of gender-based violence.

**Support communities that are struggling in the wake of COVID-19.** President-elect Biden will invest \$440 billion to provide critical support to communities struggling in the wake of COVID-19.

President-elect Biden's plan will:

- Provide grants to more than 1 million of the hardest hit small businesses and leverage \$175 billion in additional small business lending and investment.
- Distribute \$350 billion in emergency funding for state, local, and territorial governments to ensure that they are in a position to keep front line public workers on the job and paid, while also effectively distributing the vaccine, scaling testing, reopening schools, and maintaining other vital services.
- Invest \$20 billion to help hard-hit public transit agencies avoid layoffs and service reductions.
- Give Tribes \$20 billion to obtain sufficient personal protective equipment, increase access to clean water and electricity, and expand internet access so that children can learn remotely and more families can obtain basic health care through telemedicine.

In addition to addressing the public health and economic crises head on, the president-elect's plan will provide funding to upgrade federal information technology infrastructure and address the recent breaches of federal data systems. This is an urgent national security issue that cannot wait.

President-elect Biden's \$1.9 trillion plan is ambitious, but achievable, and will rescue the American economy and start beating the virus. Congress should act expeditiously to help working families, communities, and small businesses persevere through the pandemic.

This legislative package is needed now to address the immediate crises. In the coming weeks, President-elect Biden will lay out his economic recovery plan to invest in America, create millions of additional good-paying jobs, and build back better than before.