Combatting Coronavirus

Senate Democrats    |    March 17, 2020
Public health experts are warning that the U.S. is woefully unprepared to treat our citizens impacted by the virus.

Schools are closing and essential health care workers are struggling to find child care.

Economists are now forecasting a need for federal fiscal stimulus that could easily exceed the response to the 2008 Great Recession.

The most vulnerable victims of this crisis are working people and their families, especially our seniors and children.
Who are we fighting for?

- House and Senate Democrats have made it very clear from the beginning of the COVID-19 Outbreak – Families and Workers First.

- Our states and cities are telling us they need more resources quickly – medical supplies, small business relief, unemployment insurance, and more.

If President Trump and Senate Republicans demand rescue packages for corporations and industries, Democrats must fight for American workers and communities to get the benefits of taxpayer assistance.
Massive Federal Response Needed to Fight COVID-19

- It is clear that a massive investment will be required to save the country from an economic and health crisis.

- More than a decade of underinvestment in our public health system is exposing our weaknesses.

Our social safety nets must be rebuilt.

We propose a $750 billion package as an initial emergency response to protect America's workers, the businesses they support, and the middle class amidst the coronavirus crisis.
1. First, we need a massive funding injection of emergency appropriations to target programs designed to support a pandemic response. ($400 billion)

2. Second, we need to support the social safety net designed to help the vulnerable during economic downturns. ($350 billion)

3. Third, we need essential policy changes to further ensure hard-working Americans don't fall through the cracks into financial ruin due to no fault of their own.
We propose **$400 billion in emergency appropriations** divided among the following efforts:

- **Medical Surge**: hospital beds, ventilators, masks and equipment, ensure affordable care for COVID-19 patients.

- **Child Care**: a large injection of federal funding for child care, especially for health care workers needed to respond to the crisis.

- **Small Business**: Low-interest loans and loan forgiveness
Seniors: rental, food and financial assistance as well as home-based health care.

Public Housing: rental, mortgage and utilities assistance.

Schools and Children: Protections for students of all ages, whose schools may be closed and are thus lacking basic needs, including housing and meals.

$400 billion in emergency appropriations (ctd.)
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- **Public Transportation relief**: Relief for public transportation to ensure continued operations until normal ridership resumes.

- **State and Local Relief** like CDBG, EDA, and FIRE grants for Governors, Mayors, Tribes, and Fire Departments to mitigate and recover

- **Resilient infrastructure like Broadband internet** connectivity so that American workers and students stuck at home can manage amidst the crisis.
We propose a $350 billion supplemental safety net package to support America's most vulnerable.

**Unemployment Insurance:**

- Increase Benefit Size
- Waive waiting period
- 13-week extension for current enrollees
- Expand work-sharing eligibility to avoid layoffs
- Automatic extensions during life of recession
$350 billion supplemental safety net package (ctd.)

**Medicaid**
- Increase FMAP percentage to the States
- Automatic extensions during the recession

**SNAP**
- 15 percent benefit increase
- Automatic extensions during the recession

**Student debt**
- Cancel Monthly Student Payments and Have Federal Government Pay
We propose several key policy reforms to ensure hard-working Americans don't fall through the cracks during this crisis.

Let People Keep Their Money During the Crisis

- Six months of forbearance for ALL federally backed mortgages
- Moratoriums on all evictions and foreclosures
Key policy reforms (ctd.)

Expand Unemployment Insurance’s Reach

• Expand coverage during the crisis to cover the gap on paid sick days.

• Open up UI to gig workers and the self-employed.
Key policy reforms (ctd.)

- Utilize the National Guard and DoD
- Targeted Funding for Indian Country
- Remote Learning and Closing the Homework Gap
- Credit Score protections
- Buy America requirements
- Protecting prisons from COVID-19
Workers must come first in any industry rescue

- **Workers must receive majority of the benefits** of any federal aid package and aid will be clawed back if workers don't benefit.

- **Businesses must also comply with strict requirements** on the aid, especially keeping workers in their jobs and labor protections.

- **Rescued businesses must provide mandatory paid sick leave** and a $15 minimum wage for all direct employees.