

# THE HEROES ACT

House Democrats' Updated Legislation Meets the Challenge of the Coronavirus Pandemic



The \$2.2 trillion legislation protects lives, livelihoods and the life of our democracy. To address needs that have arisen since the House first acted, the updated legislation includes:

- **Strong support for small businesses**, by improving the Paycheck Protection Program to serve the smallest businesses and struggling non-profits, providing hard-hit businesses with second loans, and delivering targeted assistance for the struggling restaurant industry and independent live venue operators.
- **Additional assistance for airline industry workers**, extending the highly successful Payroll Support Program to keep airline industry workers paid.
- **More funds to bolster education and child care**, with \$225 billion for education – including \$182 billion for K-12 schools and nearly \$39 billion for postsecondary education – and \$57 billion to support child care for families.

In addition, it maintains key priorities from the version of the legislation that passed the House in May. Among the bill's many provisions, it:

- **Honors our heroes**, through \$436 billion to provide one year's worth of assistance to state, local, territorial and tribal governments who desperately need funds to pay vital workers like first responders and health workers who keep us safe and are in danger of losing their jobs.
- **Supports testing, tracing and treatment**, through \$75 billion for coronavirus testing, contact tracing and isolation measures, with special attention to the disparities facing communities of color, ensuring every American can access free coronavirus treatment, and supporting hospitals and providers. The updated bill also includes \$28 billion for procurement, distribution and education campaigns for a safe and effective vaccine.
- **Provides additional direct payments**, cushioning the economic blow of the coronavirus crisis with a more robust second round of economic impact payments of \$1,200 per taxpayer and \$500 per dependent.
- **Protects payrolls**, by enhancing the new employee retention tax credit that encourages employers to keep employees on payroll.
- **Ensures worker safety**, by requiring OSHA to issue a strong, enforceable standard within seven days to require all workplaces to develop and implement infection control plans based on CDC expertise.
- **Preserves health coverage**, protecting Americans losing their employer-provided health insurance by making unemployed Americans automatically receive the maximum ACA subsidy on the exchanges, as well as a special enrollment period in the ACA exchanges for uninsured Americans.
- **Restores unemployment benefits**, ensuring weekly \$600 federal unemployment payments through next January and preventing unemployed workers from exhausting their eligibility, providing a vital safety net for the record number of Americans who are unemployed, including those connected to the gig-economy.
- **Bolsters housing assistance**, helping struggling families afford a safe place to live with tens of billions in new supports to assist renters and homeowners make monthly rent, mortgage and utility payments and other housing-related costs – preventing homelessness.
- **Strengthens food security**, addressing rising hunger with a 15 percent increase to the maximum SNAP benefit and additional funding for nutrition programs that help families put food on the table as well as targeted support for farmers and producers impacted by the crisis.
- **Safeguards our democracy**, with new resources to ensure safe elections, an accurate Census, and preserve the Postal Service.