



March 3, 2021

Dear Senator:

We are some of the millions of Americans who've been directly impacted by COVID-19. Many of us have had a loved one taken by COVID-19 and many of us have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are living with the long term health effects of this relentless virus. More than a year after COVID-19 was first detected in the United States, we are all struggling, mourning, and eager for change. We write today to urge you to pass President Biden's COVID-19 Relief Plan.

We come from all 50 states and are Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. Some of us have been struggling with COVID-19 for almost a year, with each day a struggle simply to breathe. Some of us have been diagnosed with PTSD after a loved one was suddenly taken by COVID-19 and are receiving counseling or have struggled to connect with much needed mental health resources.

Many of us have also lost our jobs or have been otherwise economically impacted by the pandemic. Even as we have tried to heal from our grief and trauma, or to recover our physical well-being, many of us have also had to deal with terrible financial struggles. Some of us are caring for family members who are "Long Haulers" and suffer from ongoing and serious after effects from COVID-19 and who are no longer able to work and require at home care. Others of us have been unable to return to work.

Collectively, our stories represent devastating loss on a scale that is almost unimaginable – and the trauma and illness we have each experienced has been caused or exacerbated by government failure. We did our jobs. We worked as frontline workers. We sent our parents masks to keep them safe in nursing homes. We followed state and federal recommendations that we were told would keep us safe. Now, we need our leaders to step in and do what should have been done many months ago – give communities and COVID-19 survivors access to the support we need to recover and heal.

President Biden's proposal will provide desperately needed funding that will help end the pandemic, direct financial relief to American families living on the brink, and fiscal support for states, cities, and transit agencies struggling with costs incurred in the fight against COVID-19. Leaders on both sides of the aisle agree that more action is needed, but disagree on the scale of action needed. We know firsthand that a moment this devastating cannot be fixed by half-measures, such as the initial counterproposal of \$618 billion from a group of ten Republican senators, and that Americans need support at or above the level that President Biden has proposed.

Over the past year, more than 28 million Americans have contracted COVID-19 and more than 515,000 lives have been taken. Sadly, our numbers continue to grow: on an average day, nearly 100,000 Americans test positive for COVID-19 and more than 1,500 die. Our community of survivors is growing at a terrifying rate.



Today, we come together as a community of survivors to ask that you act together to provide the relief that your constituents so desperately need. President Biden's proposed plan is an important step towards

investing in the financial relief, treatment, and ongoing support that this community of survivors needs to fully recover from the devastating impact of COVID-19. Some of these resources should be allocated so that families who have had a loved one taken by COVID-19 in 2021 will be able to be reimbursed for funeral costs (as was done as part of the COVID-19 relief that was enacted in December 2020) and for the ongoing physical and mental health care that COVID-19 survivors need.

We urge immediate and bipartisan support for this package, as the need for support is too great to be held up by partisan bickering and recent polling shows that Americans [are unified in their support](#) of Biden's rescue plan. Therefore, if this proposal does not receive supermajority support of 60 votes, we encourage and support efforts to pass this legislation by any other means necessary.

This is especially urgent because COVID-19 has also disproportionately impacted communities of color. In America, a person of color is nearly twice as likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19 and four times more likely to be hospitalized, compared to white people. Latinos are uninsured at a percentage three times higher and Black people are uninsured at nearly twice the rate of white people. These communities are in every state. They also disproportionately make up the frontline workers who have been held up as heroes throughout the pandemic, but rarely given the support or protection they deserve.

We speak out now to honor our loved ones who have died from this deadly virus and our own experiences surviving COVID-19. We speak out because now is the time for action. After nearly a year of this pandemic and of shared sacrifice, it's important that you, our elected leaders, take action to provide the support we need as survivors and the resources this country needs to end this pandemic as quickly as possible and to heal as fully as possible.

Signed,

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