



CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS
Joaquin Castro | Chairman
116TH CONGRESS

April 8, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
HC-5, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

Thank you for your continued leadership in putting workers and families first as Congress responds to the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States nationally is in the acceleration phase of the pandemic and different parts of the country are seeing different levels of COVID-19 activity, which presents unique challenges to addressing the crisis. As of April 7, 2020, there are 377,317 coronavirus cases in the U.S. and 11,773 related deaths. Preliminary data shows that the virus is particularly devastating minority communities who are suffering high infection and fatality rates and that we will bear the brunt of the economic impact of coronavirus. Long-standing health and income disparities among minority communities are exacerbating the spread, response, and impact of the virus. A comprehensive recovery strategy requires that Congress provide the tools and resources necessary to resolve these specific and disturbing trends. As Congress works to pass another package designed to provide relief to families, businesses, and communities across the country, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) respectfully writes to you to share our priorities for legislation intended to mitigate the emerging effects of this public health and economic crisis.

On March 27, 2020 the House passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to provide a \$2.3 trillion stimulus package for the American economy. After extensive negotiations and compromise, the final package included key priorities for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus including: \$300 billion in direct cash assistance to individuals and families, \$260 billion in unemployment relief, and \$377 billion in relief for small businesses and non-profits. The CARES Act also includes funding for key public health programs critical to Latino communities including \$100 billion in grants to Medicare and Medicaid enrolled suppliers, \$27 billion for Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund (PHSSEF), and \$450 million for food banks that can provide food assistance for all families struggling during these challenging times, regardless of immigration status. Nevertheless, key provisions important to our communities were excluded from the CARES Act, including direct cash assistance to filers who use Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), guaranteed coverage of treatment for all individuals, regardless of immigration status, and an automatic extension for employment authorization documents. Furthermore, while the CARES Act provides much-needed relief for millions of Americans, much of the guidance was left to individual agencies resulting in confusion and prolonged implementation.

During this critical moment, Latinos, including approximately 200,000 DACA recipients, are on the frontlines in occupations and industry groups that continue to propel our country forward in the midst of this pandemic. Latinos are the health care professionals caring for COVID-19 patients, the farm workers in the fields providing food for our families, the grocery store employees restocking our shelves, the transportation employees keeping our nation moving, and the professional custodial staff ensuring our hospitals and other public spaces are safe for everyone. As our communities continue to show up and continue to risk their own personal health on the frontlines, Congress must show up to be take care of these individuals and families.

As Congress develops the next stimulus package, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus urges leadership to develop a bill that addresses the emerging trends showing that minorities are bearing the brunt of the pandemic, including low-income and undocumented communities. As the economy shifts to teleworking, data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics demonstrates that working from home is a luxury for many and that only 16.2% of Hispanics can work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ Additional Pew Research data shows that 49% of Hispanics are already reporting that someone in their household has lost their job or taken a pay cut as a consequence of the crisis.² Moreover, during the Great Recession, Hispanic communities saw a 66% drop in median household wealth—the largest percentage drop among all racial and ethnic groups.³ Any forthcoming legislation must include stringent oversight provisions to ensure that history does not repeat itself and that Latino families don't suffer the same fate. We urge Congress to continue putting families and workers first – not corporate interests. As we continue to deal with the immediate and long-term impacts of this unprecedented public health crisis, Congress must again act to provide much-needed relief to American families and workers whose lives have been upended by the pandemic.

We respectfully request that you consider the following priorities as you draft the next round of relief for the American public.

Resolve CARES Act Implementation Issues

- Improve guidelines for the implementation of the Paycheck Protection Program, including explicit language to help Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) participate in lending:
 - Extend loan forgiveness structure to 6 months after a business is reopened and operating at full capacity;
 - Increase the repayment term for unforgiven PPP loans from 2 years to 10 years;
 - Clarify eligibility for small business franchise owners, including visa holders, by tying eligibility to part 436 of title 16, Code of Federal Regulations;
 - Expand eligibility for all Tribal businesses for the SBA PPP;
 - Ensure Native CDFIs qualify as lenders in the PPP program and specifically provide \$100 million for the Native American CDFI Assistance program;
 - Provide “Delegated Authority” to additional lenders that have a track record of opening access to capital for underserved small businesses and nonprofits. This can be best accomplished by automatically providing “Delegated Authority” to any CDFI that applies by virtue of the fact that they have already obtained a relevant certification from the Treasury Department.
 - The SBA or the Treasury Department should directly provide liquidity to eligible lenders that have a track record of opening access to capital for underserved small businesses and nonprofits, specifically for the purpose of deploying the PPP product.
 - The SBA should set a minimum fee of \$2,500 per PPP loan to eliminate the current disincentive in the lender fee structure for processing small loans below \$50,000, which are more likely to be made to underserved microbusinesses, who may in fact cost more to serve because they are likely to require more assistance from the lender.
 - The SBA should change the regulation to allow businesses to include in their applications amounts to pay 1099 contractors that primarily rely on that business for their income, as determined by the business owner and documented through an attestation.
 - An extension of the Paycheck Protection Program.
- Address the rebate issues for individuals to receive direct cash assistance:
 - Change the definition of “eligible child” to ensure adult children between 18 to 24 years, including children/adults with disabilities, who are dependents qualify for the \$500 child credit;
 - Ensure that individuals with Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs) are eligible for rebate payments and direct cash assistance;

- Amend language that would ensure anyone who is part of the workforce receive critical economic benefits
- Guarantee that mixed-status families are eligible for automatic direct cash assistance payments.
- Fix the Coronavirus Relief Fund so smaller localities are eligible to receive funding;
- Direct all federal agencies, including but not limited to sub-agencies, review their communications practices and public awareness campaigns to ensure that they are effectively reaching non-English speaking populations;
- Appropriate and direct federal advertising dollars for specific programs where community outreach is needed for spending on local media, including those serving minority communities;
- Treat U.S. territories as states in direct payments for local governments under the Coronavirus Relief Fund.

The Economy

- Provide regular monthly payments of \$2,000 to all adults and \$1,000 to every child over the next four months or until a certain economic or unemployment threshold is met;
- Provide \$1 billion in funding for Community Development Financial Institutions;
- Provide \$3 billion in additional funding to the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), including funding for the MBDA to provide counseling through Minority Business Centers on accessing federal relief;
- Require Business Interruption Insurance to cover COVID-19;
- Provide relief provisions for mid-size businesses with 501-750 employees;
- Designate a portion of stimulus funds provided to businesses for their recovery efforts for advertising on local media;
- Expand FMLA, removing exemptions for large businesses so that all are eligible for benefits;
- Stop the collection of government fines and fees during the pandemic;
- Require that any owner-financed lending arrangements offer the same deferment terms that banks and other lenders are offering;
- Include language that requires the Federal Reserve to buy additional long-term municipal debt while prioritizing recently refinanced debt instruments;
- Hold companies liable for spread of misinformation and price gouging and create a mechanism to streamline consumer complaints on price gouging and implement restitution provisions that provide reimbursement to victims;
- Prohibit for-profit debt settlement companies from overcharging consumers and prohibit all fees except as a percentage of the amount saved on successful settlements;
- Protections for consumers from payday lenders;
- Provide assistance for remote notarization that would help real estate professionals to continue to do business from the safety of their homes. Current regulations prevent remote home viewings and mortgage transactions;
- Provide additional educational and informational messaging and programming on how the public can manage the economic and public health impact arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for minority and foreign language-speaking populations and broadcasting such programming in multiple languages on radio and television stations that serve minorities and foreign-language speakers.

Farmworker Protections

- Protect farmworkers, safeguard our food security, and prevent disruptions to the food supply chain:
 - Inclusion of the House-passed Farm Workforce Modernization Act (H.R.5038)

- Health and Safety in the Workplace: Resources to support agricultural employers in the development of a mandatory plan to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace, as well as in employer-provided housing and transportation, that follows CDC recommendations and includes social distancing, sanitation, education, training, and posting information in appropriate languages;
- All agricultural employers should provide at least one hand-washing station with clean water, soap, and paper towels for every 10 workers. The OSHA Field Sanitation Standard already requires hand-washing stations but only one per every 20 employees within one-quarter mile from the place of work and are not required for farms with fewer than 11 employees;
- Provide additional funds and flexibility to support the childcare (Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Program) and the nutrition needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers;
- Ensure that stimulus funding does not subsidize agricultural employers that conduct involuntary furloughs of farmworkers or reduce pay rates and benefits;
- Extend sick pay, remove barriers to access sick pay, and allow administrative leave when family members are infected with COVID-19.

Housing

- Increase funding for the Department of Urban Housing and Development’s (HUD) Emergency Solutions Grant Programs for emergency shelters, hotel vouchers, and supportive services;
- Provide robust funding for the Housing Counseling Assistance Program;
- Provide funding for HUD’s Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP);
- Suspension of evictions for mixed-status families in public housing facilities;
- Institute nationwide rent moratorium and housing for all and stop evictions of tenants in rental properties of all sizes. Utilize empty hotel rooms for homeless and those home insecure at no cost, particularly for those that have received bailout money;
- Utilize unused hotels and/or cruise ships as quarantine zones for COVID-19 patients;
- Expand eviction and foreclosure benefits to non-federally backed mortgages and apartments;
- Place a national moratorium on water shutoffs for residential buildings, and require that utility companies that have turned residents’ water off in the last three months turn it back on through the duration of the crisis;
- Provide \$100 billion in funding to create an Emergency Rental Assistance Fund;
- Forbid the Homeowners Association from collecting fees during the pandemic or provide financial relief for individuals to pay HOA fees. This includes relief to assists with space rent in mobile home parks;
- Extend mortgage forbearance for up to 12 months for all homeowners.

Small Business

- Expand the Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Economic Injury Loan to start-up companies;
- Expand the SBA’s PPP and “Distressed Sector” Lending Program to expand broadcasters’ eligibility and access to both programs;
- Full tax credit or other form of reimbursement for businesses under 500 employees. This tax credit should be provided, but appropriately scaled for larger employers;
- Direct the SBA to issue tax rebates for minority small businesses;
- Direct the SBA to provide direct lending.

Workforce and Hazard Pay

- Provide workforce and hazard pay to:

- health care workers, farmworkers, grocery store workers, janitors/custodians, postal carriers, law enforcement, childcare workers, first responders, firefighters, and other workers deemed essential (utility workers, transportation workers, sanitation workers, and other hourly employees);
- federal employees who are required to report to work, including Title 38 employees with the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Transportation Security Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration.
- Create Personal Protective Equipment standards for frontline transit/transportation workers (flight attendants, pilots, TSA agents, bus drivers, train operators, etc.);
- Expansion of paid leave;
- Provide funding for childcare for essential workers;
- Hazard Pay for Essential Workers - provide those deemed essential pay that is equal to their worth.
- Ensure every worker who is deemed essential by states is getting paid time and a half for their hourly wages or at a level that is appropriate for hazard pay;
- Require companies to cover costs of necessary equipment (PPE) for employees to continue work in a safe and healthy manner (i.e. masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, etc);
- Ensure this covers all workers, included contractors, gig workers, part-time, tipped, etc.

Health Care

Testing and Treatment

- Provide free COVID-19 testing, treatment, and services for all, regardless of immigration status;
- Vaccinations be available at no charge to all, regardless of status;
- Provide coverage for all individuals and/or monetary relief for insured families who need help paying off their COVID-19-related hospital bills;
- Stop medical debt reporting to credit bureaus during COVID-19.

Medicaid and Medicare

- Medicaid Fix: Include permanent legislative fix that will address the medical needs of immigrants and undocumented communities. For example, categorizing COVID-19 testing and treatment by defining it as an emergency medical condition;
- Continued robust funding for other safety net providers, like Medicaid;
- Eliminate the Medicaid Fiscal Accountability Rule (MFAR);
- Provide Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) payment cuts from taking effect on December 1, 2020;
- Increase the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) to 100 percent coverage for 1-2 Fiscal Years;
- Place hold on Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) premium increases for the next 12 months;
- Help provide adequate health care for incarcerated individuals (and provide health care cost relief to state and local governments) by repealing Section 1905(a)(A) of the Social Security Act or waiving on an emergency basis until at least 6 months after the COVID-19 crisis is over;
- Incarcerated persons should have their Medicaid eligibility automatically reinstated once they are released.
- Include bipartisan language to reinstate Medicaid eligibility for citizens of Freely Associated States (FAS) who make up a significant proportion of the rapidly growing Pacific Islander population in the United States (this language was included in the Democratic proposal of the third coronavirus package but did not ultimately make it into the final package)

Special Enrollment Period

- Require a Special Enrollment Period during any public health emergency declaration and ensure plans cover all required testing and treatment related to the declaration;

- Include the Care for COVID-19 Act, which provides no cost-sharing coverage of treatments related to COVID-19 and adds special enrollment periods for people testing positive.

Community Health Centers

- Provide an additional \$2 billion in funding for Community Health Centers;
- Provide an extension for Community Health Centers Authorization for the next five years.

Health Care Workforce

- Expand health care workforce by enlisting foreign-educated physicians (FEPs) to supplement nursing supply;
- Expand the Teaching Health Care Program so more residents can participate and extend funding for 5 years;
- Strengthen health care workforce backup by identifying a program to have foreign-trained physicians residing in the US but working in a non-medical field to support workforce shortages. For example, eliminate the green card backlog of U.S. trained international medical graduates that will boost the flexibility of the health care workforce allowing these works the flexibility to work were the need is great.

Native American and Indian Health

- Allow tribal communities to apply directly for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Public Health Emergency Preparedness;
- Allow Tribal governments to directly access the National Strategic Stockpile;
- Increase funding for the Indian Health Service (IHS) by \$1 billion;
- Include prioritization of projects to assist with pandemic response and purchase medical equipment;
- Require that IHS create a strategic plan for short, medium and long term priorities to streamline spending;
- 100% Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP) for Urban Indian Health Programs when serving American Indian (AI)/Alaska Native (AN) patients;
- Create a position at Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for distribution of medical supplies across Indian Country for COVID-19;
- Include the Native Health and Wellness Act (HR 4534) which creates grant programs to recruit health professionals in Indian Country and for public health awareness to prevent disease;
- Include the Proper and Reimbursed Care (PRC) for Native Veterans Act (HR 6237), which would require the VA to reimburse IHS for contract care for Native veterans, increasing desperately needed third party payments to IHS.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- Boost the maximum SNAP benefit by 15 percent;
- Increase the monthly minimum SNAP benefits from \$16 to \$30;
- Increase SNAP benefits and expand SNAP access for college students;
- Place a hold on harmful rules proposed by the Executive Branch that weaken SNAP eligibility and benefits, that enacted, will: 1) severely limit broad-based categorical eligibility (BBCE) and effectively throw hundreds of thousands of children off of school meal participation, 2) strip states of their much needed flexibility to set their own Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) using state-based and current energy cost information; and 3) eliminate state flexibility to waive certain work requirements and exemption for SNAP participants who are able bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs);
- Ensure access to coronavirus relief measures to vulnerable communities by extending nutrition assistance through a Disaster-SNAP program to allow individuals and families receive direct individual assistance from FEMA.

Diabetes

- Stop cost-sharing for insulin;
- Waive in-person physician visit requirement for Medicare Continuous Glucose Monitors and insulin pump coverage.

Defense Production Act of 1950

- Direct the procurement of urgently needed resources our medical professionals are requesting to combat COVID-19 under the Defense Production Act of 1950.

Health Care System

- Create a health care system that is better positioned to absorb the impact of pandemics and other catastrophic occurrence;
- Provide a national baseline of health care to low-income individuals and families;
- Provide the assistance necessary in rural communities.

Linguistically and Culturally Appropriate Resources

- Increase funds for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide language access and public outreach on coronavirus preparedness, response, and recovery to hard-to-reach populations;
- Funding for additional translation services for hospitals and health clinics who need it;
- Require CDC and HHS to track data in real time how COVID-19 is impacting minority communities.

Mental Health

- Inclusion of HR 4564 the Suicide Prevention Lifeline Improvement Act to dramatically expand the services needed to assist those in crisis and ensure they receive the help needed in a timely manner;
- Inclusion of HR 1109 the Mental Health Services for Students Act to provide \$200 million in competitive grants for public schools across the country to partner with local mental health professionals to establish comprehensive mental health services for students. This would ensure the long-term availability of mental health services to help students process the damage caused from this pandemic.

Cities and Local Governments

- Provide flexibility to local government to spend their emergency homelessness funding immediate solutions tailored to combatting COVID-19 and its impacts on the homeless population;
- Acquire micro-dwelling units to provide quarantine capacity to move individuals who show symptoms of COVID-19 or who test positive for COVID-19 into isolation placements;
- Allow for states to count their expenditures on telehealth projects like Project ECHO as medical assistance under Medicaid if used for training medical staff to respond to the COVID-19 crisis;
- Address the unique concerns of border communities that are losing local revenue because of decreased border transit;

U.S. Territories

- Ensure parity for U.S. territories under any legislation signed into law, which will result in a stronger recovery for our entire country;
- Include a minimum of \$1.27 billion for nutritional assistance for Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa;
- Eliminate the Medicaid cap for all U.S. territories and extend the terms of the Medicaid FMAP for U.S. territories in 42 U.S.C. 1396d(ff)(1) for an additional 7 quarters;
- Include the House-passed Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief and Puerto Rico Disaster Tax Relief Act, H.R. 5687;
- Expand block grants and tax credit programs to all U.S. territories;
- Provide salaries for all teaching staff in the insular areas through the end of fiscal year 2020.

Immigration

- Direct the Department of Homeland Security to suspend all immigration enforcement activities and operations including deportations, immigration arrests, mass raids, detentions during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Release all medically vulnerable detainees and non-priority detainees in Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facilities, to help reduce the spread of COVID-19;
- Swiftly and safely place children with sponsors in a bit to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in ORR facilities;
- Direct ICE to explore alternatives to detention for those in custody, particularly those who are at a heightened risk of developing serious illness from COVID-19 such as the elderly and individuals with heart or lung conditions, diabetes, or compromised immune systems;
- Include an across-the-board restriction against the transfer and re-programming of funds for the purposes of funding immigration enforcement, immigration detention, wall construction, and any efforts that advance the Trump Administration's anti-immigration agenda;
- Ensure that the federal government complies with all CDC public safety measures, including at holding facilities, prisons, immigration courts, and on federal construction sites that are necessary for COVID-19 response, including the border wall;
- Urge DHS and the Department of State to ensure that foreign physicians and healthcare workers are able to provide much needed support to the domestic workforce int the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, including providing care for patients suffering form COVID-19. Including, Expedited Adjudications, Employment Authorization Documents, Increase Mobility, Medical licenses, Agency Teams, Flexibility for J-1 physicians, Visa Processing;
- Direct USCIS to extend all filing and response deadlines, excuse any late filings, grant automatic extensions of stays when possible, and grant deferred action when someone's status has expired;
- Ensure DHS complies with the TVPRA to ensure that UACs are turned over to ORR custody;
- Suspend all in-person immigration hearings and instead work to provide robust remote access alternatives for detained immigrants wishing to proceed with their hearings during this pandemic;
- Parole asylum-seekers under the Remain in Mexico program into the U.S. to reunite with their sponsors; Exempt all COVID-19 related aid from public charge determination or any future immigration status determination;
- Path to citizenship for all essential workers and deportation protections for these workers during the pandemic;
- Automatically extend employment authorization for all immigrants including Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders;
- Include H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act ;
- Retroactive imposing conditionality to bailout funding;
- Prohibit funds be used for border wall construction or reprogramming of funds;
- Modify immigration policies that deter immigrants from seeking health services for the duration of the coronavirus emergency and for 60 days after the emergency ends:
- Suspend the public charge rules, in-person ICE checks, the detention and removal of domestic violence and sexual assault survivors who have pending immigration applications;
- Require telephonic bond hearings and/or establish electronic bond system to enable detained individuals to seek release.
- Ensure that everyone has access to COVID-19 testing and treatment by:
- Ensuring that accessing coronavirus-related services will not be counted against an individual with respect to immigration status or in consideration for other federal programs;
- Prohibiting discrimination in any program funded by a coronavirus relief bill based on immigration status.
- Eliminate the 5-year bar so that Legal Permanent Residents can access SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, etc.;

- Resources for USCIS to develop technical capacity to offer virtual naturalization oath ceremonies – our colleagues estimate there are about 126,000 people in limbo who are already approved to naturalize and are just waiting to take the oath of allegiance; keeping operations moving to the maximum extent possible will help control/alleviate the immigration/naturalization application backlog.

Transportation and Infrastructure

- Include provisions to reduce emissions at ports, lower energy costs, create jobs in electrification and advanced manufacturing, increase trade competitiveness;
- Provide investments in water and wastewater infrastructure so that all American communities are on a trajectory to be able to deliver 24-hour, potable water and to process wastewater in a manner that protects existing aquifers and water sources from biological and chemical contamination. Investments should be made to enable communities to meet these goals within the next 10 years.
 - Incorporate H.R. 865, the Rebuild America's Schools Act, with an accelerated timeline for completion within the next five years;
 - Provide support for clean energy jobs by allowing direct cash payments in lieu of the Investment Tax Credit and extending by one year all the Safe Harbor, begin construction, and continuous construction provisions;
 - Authorize increased funding for the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) E-Rate program so that the FCC can reimburse individual schools, school districts, including tribal schools, and libraries that provide Wi-Fi hot spots and/or technology for families and school aged children to address the digital divide and facilitate distance learning;
 - Include Tribal Internet Advancement Act and add "Indian Country" to the list of priority areas for broadband expansion for the Universal Service Fund at the FCC;
 - Increase E-rate eligibility to include Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) and allow the FCC E-rate program to provide mobile hot spots to students;
 - Authorize broadband funding dedicated specifically for tribal communities;
 - Request CDBG funding be set aside for local or small municipalities;
 - 1.6 billion in funding for election accessibility and security, with no matching requirement for state funds (or with language allowing states an extended period of time to produce matching funds while still receiving new federal funding as soon as possible in 2020 – e.g., any state that fails to secure matching funds within two years would be liable for repayment of assistance received).

Census

- Request that Census Bureau leadership regularly brief Members of Congress and their staff on incoming census data and to consult with Members of Congress to reach well-informed and widely accepted decisions, specifically with regards to timeline changes and adjustments;
- Direct the Bureau to keep current employees at the ready and urge the Bureau to request additional funding if it is concerned about exhausting the contingency fund for employee salaries;
- Dedicate funding towards the United States Census Bureau's Virtual Center and dedicated funding to scale up their telework capabilities;
- Direct the Census Bureau to pursue adaptations to get call centers back up to speed, including the creation of remote call centers to match the volume of calls for individuals that require language assistance and additional help;
- Direct the Census Bureau to develop a new communications and outreach plans in light of the pandemic to reach historically Hard-to-Count communities, including but not limited to: Spanish-only speaking households, farmworker communities, individuals living in transient housing, communities with low broadband access, and tribal communities by directing the Bureau to work with state and local governments;

- Direct the Census Bureau to mail reminder letters to any Update/Leave addresses on the mainland U.S. that can receive mail delivery, as is being done in Puerto Rico;
- Direct the Census Bureau to reassign Partnership and Outreach Specialists to seek opportunities to follow official safety guidelines to safely place posters, flyers, etc. in essential businesses and locations;
- Request that operational timelines are more thoroughly reassessed and adjusted in collaboration with Congressional authorizers and stakeholders in a way that preserves the data quality that is so critical to our collective future. This assessment should be evidence-based and consider the following:
- An extension in the field operational timeline that reduces the use of administrative records. Imputation and administrative records should be the last resort to capture those residents that may not have self-responded. We know that administrative records are unavailable for many of our HTC communities since some of these families do not have access to government services that may be relied upon as records.
- As increased investment into a well-qualified and expanded workforce that has the capacity to cover more households in a compressed timeframe. With the delay of Update Leave operations, the Bureau field operation becomes ever more critical.
- A robust virtual training program should be deployed to educate the enumerator workforce so that when it is safe to conduct in-person enumeration, the Bureau is prepared to count all communities.
- Enumeration efforts for people experiencing homelessness should be further delayed. The Bureau should work with counties and states to be more readily prepared for this enumeration given the dramatic change in landscape.

Education

- Provide an additional \$625 million in funding for all federal Hispanic Service Institution (HSI) grant programs, including Title III, Part F and Title V, Parts A and B under the Higher Education Act, the USDA-NIFA HSIs Education Grant Program under the Farm Bill and the National Science Foundation's HSI program;
- Allow student loan borrowers to refinance their loans down to interest rates that reflect the current market;
- Funding to understand the short- and long-term effects of sudden school closures on students;
- Student loan relief for health care frontline workers;
- Provide salaries for all teaching staff in the insular areas through the end of fiscal year 2020;
- Provide IDEA funding parity for outlying areas;
- Increase Education Stabilization Fund in CARES Act from \$30.75B to at least the \$50B provided in the Democratic Take Responsibility for Workers and Families Act, H.R. 6379. Require that funds allocated for K-12 be used to maintain pre-COVID-19 payroll of teaching and support staff and to provide for educational continuity for students, where schools have been closed;
- Strengthen oversight of the Department of Education's work monitoring the deliver and educational services to students, ensuring that they comply with federal requirements to provide continuity in learning and any required services.
- Require the Department of Education to issue guidance and best practices for teaching English Language Learners to ensure school districts are guaranteeing meaningful access to education through accessible modes while students are not physically present in schools.
- Funding for WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, specifically \$1 Billion for grants to States for adult education and literacy programs. Congress can provide renewed attention on building foundational skills by directing increased funds for adult education and literacy services for workers in low-wage jobs to help them complete their high school diploma or equivalency, improve their

English language literacy skills, access integrated education and training, and postsecondary education opportunities;

- Strengthen oversight over the newly announced waiver process that allows states to cancel standardized testing in public schools to ensure that it is streamlined, simple to request, and not indiscriminately broad.

Workforce Training

- The outbreak of COVID-19 has disproportionately affected workers with low wages and workers of color. Considering up to ten million Americans filed jobless claims in the last two weeks, and the number of unemployed and dislocated workers will only rise as the recession worsens, it is imperative that Congress act and provide relief to these essential workers. Adult employment and training programs and dislocated worker training programs must be strengthened and funded.
- Provide \$5 billion for grants to States for adult employment and training activities, including supportive services and needs-related payments.
- \$5 billion for grants to States for dislocated worker employment and training activities, including supportive services and needs-related payments.
- \$300 million for grants to States for Indian and Native American programs, including supportive services and needs-related payments.
- \$300 million for grants to States for migrant and seasonal farmworker programs, including supportive services and needs-related payments.


Diversity


- Mandate that companies or industries receiving stimulus funds from the federal government have minority participation in their stock and bond offerings and at a minimum of 10% in their money management of pension funds, investment banking needs, and all professional services.
- Require that all major film companies and studios that receive stimulus funds report on the diversity for both above-the-line and below-the-line workers for their film projects currently in development and in projects moving forward. All stimulus fund recipients must report on this data in a disaggregated fashion, i.e. the number of Latinos, the number of African-Americans, the number of Asian-Americans, and others;
- Require that all stimulus fund recipients commit to hiring more Latinos both in front of and behind the camera;
- Recipients must provide hiring goals and report to Congress on their progress on these metrics by the end of each fiscal year;
- Require that all stimulus fund recipients provide a plan to Congress on how they will advance and promote Latinos to decision-making positions in project greenlighting, finance, marketing, public relations, and other executive roles at their companies; Require that all stimulus fund recipients establish a budget to greenlight projects helmed by people of color and members of the LGBTQ community;
- Commit to streamlining their efforts to hire Latino talent through partnerships with non-profit organizations;
- Require a commitment from major entertainment companies to move away from gig and contracting business models and to instead provide a plan for formalizing their hiring processes to ensure that Latinos are not financially excluded from entering the workforce;
- Commit to maintaining Diversity & Inclusion departments and not eliminating these important departments as companies consider reducing budgets and downsizing;
- Provide assistance to small businesses who support the entertainment industry like equipment rental companies, hospitality, sound engineers, and make-up artists;


- Address the needs of non-profit organizations that are already leading the way in working with diverse talent by providing financial assistance.


We appreciate your consideration of these CHC priorities. If you have any questions, please reach out to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Executive Director, Alma Acosta.


Sincerely,


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