

“People’s Bailout”: How to Fund a Just Economic Recovery

Congress so far has allocated \$2.5 trillion in emergency stimulus funding. Economic and climate justice advocates are pushing for distribution that will address immediate needs of communities, but also lay the groundwork for a more resilient and just economy. “This pandemic has unveiled the interdependent crises of classism and racism, economic decline, and climate destruction. COVID-19 is magnifying the ills of normalizing profits over people,” says a 350.org statement. As of May, 50 members of Congress and hundreds of social change organizations had endorsed the #PeoplesBailout’s five principles:

1. Health of all people is the top priority.



Expanded federal funding for Medicaid

Expanded hospital capacity to underserved areas

Paid sick leave and paid family medical leave—no exceptions

Free and accessible testing, treatment, and protective equipment

Full funding for Indian Health Service and urban Indian health centers

2. Relief is for communities and front-line workers.



Not shareholders or corporate executives

Loans maintain payroll and benefits

Funds tied to conditions that ensure fair employment opportunities for all

3. Funding gets directly to those who need it.



Broaden unemployment insurance

Sizable cash payments to every person

Larger payments to front-line workers and the poor

Increase food aid programs

Extend housing assistance, halt evictions and foreclosure

Expand childcare for working families

Relieve student debt

5. Democratic processes are protected.



Everyone can vote by mail

Automatic voter registration

Accurate 2020 Census

Continuance of government even without in-person sessions

4. Investment in a just, regenerative economy:



Counter systemic inequities.

Tackle the climate crisis.

Create family-sustaining jobs.

Rebuild infrastructure

Replace lead pipes

Expand wind and solar power

Clean and affordable public transit

Weatherize buildings

Build and repair public housing

Manufacture clean energy goods

Ecological restoration

Regenerative agriculture led by family farmers

Reductions in climate emissions and pollution

High-road labor standards