

Interfaith Priorities for Recovery Bill

As a member of the national Washington Interreligious Staff Community, a network with over 70 national religious organizations and denominations from a variety of different faiths of which JCPA is an active member. This coalition has come together to offer the following policy recommendations for the recovery package.

As we emerge from the depths of the COVID crisis and the economic fallout, we urge you to consider bold legislation that will bring about a just, sustainable, and inclusive recovery, one that addresses the systemic issues and racial injustices laid bare by the pandemic. Now is the time to go bold, an opportunity to enact recovery legislation like this comes once in a generation. While we don't all have specific policies on every recommendation listed, we come together to call for a bold recovery package and the specific policies from our various working groups

We urge you to prioritize the following as you develop recovery legislation:

Support basic human needs and allow all individuals to live with dignity:

- Make permanent the expansions of the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit from the American Rescue Plan. This could cut childhood poverty by nearly 50% and provide greater equity in the tax code.
- Institute a national, permanent family and medical paid leave program and create affordable childcare.
- Expand housing choice vouchers so that all households eligible for assistance receive support.
- Expand the summer EBT program to all eligible children to prevent spikes in hunger during the summer months when kids aren't in school.
- Lift the ban on SNAP and TANF for people with drug felony convictions.
- Make high-speed internet accessible, affordable, and nationwide, especially in rural areas.

Commit to adequate funding of the federal government's trust and treaty responsibilities to tribal nations:

- Despite how the pandemic has disproportionately impacted Indian Country, tribal nations only received .5 percent of the \$2 trillion in the CARES Act and only .4 percent of the \$900 billion in the Consolidated Appropriations Act.
- Invest in infrastructure on tribal lands. Lack of access to electricity, running water, and broadband persists for many tribal families.

Close the Medicaid Health Gap and strengthen access to quality, affordable health care:

- Close the Medicaid Coverage Gap in Non-Expansion States by providing coverage for the first time to 2.2 million people living below the poverty line in the 12 states.

- Require state Medicaid programs to cover incarcerated individuals 30 days before release to ensure better care transitions.
- Make all lawfully present immigrants eligible for Medicaid and CHIP.
- Close the Gap in Medicaid Funding to the U.S. territories.

Address the climate crisis with an emphasis on environmental justice:

- Big and bold investments in clean, renewable energy to modernize our electric grid; in electric vehicles, charging infrastructure and incentives and upgrading and expanding public transit to electrify transportation and connect communities; in energy, efficiency and affordable energy-efficient housing to help people stay in their homes and help those in need, access safe and affordable housing.
- Pass a national Clean Energy Standard that achieves 100% renewable, pollution-free electricity by 2035, while also expanding investments in wind and solar power.
- Invest in lead pipe remediation and drinking water and wastewater infrastructure to ensure clean water for all.
- Direct at least 40% of the investments to BIPOC and low-income communities that have been forced to bear an unequal burden of pollution and the pandemic.

Invest in global and domestic manufacturing to produce enough vaccines to end the COVID-19 pandemic:

- \$25 billion for the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority to retrofit and build necessary vaccine production lines, to facilitate sharing of technology, and to fund the purchase of input materials to produce 8 billion vaccine doses needed to reach 4 billion people, especially in low- and middle-income countries. This money would support both domestic and regional facilities around the world. “