



Federal COVID-19 Stimulus Bill

The COVID-19 federal stimulus bill, which was passed by the Senate and is expected to be taken up by the House today includes the following highlights:

- Approximately \$500 billion that can be used to back loans and assistance to companies, including \$50 billion for loans to U.S. airlines, as well as state and local governments.
- More than \$350 billion to aid small business.
- About \$117 billion for hospitals, according to an estimate from the American Hospital Association. Creates a \$100 billion public health and social emergency fund to reimburse providers for expenses and lost revenues related to the coronavirus pandemic. About \$65 billion will go to hospitals, with the rest funneled to doctors, nurses, suppliers and others, the association said.
- Boosts reimbursements by 20% for treating Medicare patients with coronavirus. And it eliminates \$8 billion in scheduled payment reductions to hospitals caring for large numbers of uninsured and Medicaid patients, as well as temporarily removing a 2% cut for treating Medicare patients, which was part of the automatic budget cuts under sequestration.
- Direct payments to lower- and middle-income individuals (\$1,200 for each adult, as well as \$500 for each child).
- Unemployment insurance would be extended to four months, the benefits would be bolstered by \$600 weekly and eligibility would be expanded to cover more workers.
- Democrats demanded and won a series of restraints on corporations that would benefit from loans or investments from the Treasury Department, as well as an oversight mechanism for who gets money.
 - Any company receiving a government loan would be subject to a ban on stock buybacks through the term of the loan plus one additional year.
 - They also would have to limit executive bonuses and take steps to protect workers.
 - The Treasury Department would have to disclose the terms of loans or other aid to companies and a new Treasury inspector general would oversee the lending program.
- Democrats won language that would bar any business owned by Trump or his family from getting loans from Treasury. Businesses owned by members of Congress, heads of executive departments and Vice President Mike Pence also would be blocked.
- Schumer, in a letter to Democrats, highlighted a series of transparency measures that would prevent keeping loans secret and create a new inspector general to oversee the program. Schumer also said that hundreds of billions would be spent on priorities such as the expansion of unemployment benefits, money for hospitals as well as more funding for cities and transportation.
- Democrats also rejected the \$3 billion sought by the Trump administration to buy oil to fill the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.
- The initial \$8 billion plan passed by Congress March 5 is funding emergency health care needs stemming from the coronavirus, and a second plan enacted last week will provide many Americans with paid sick leave, food assistance and free coronavirus testing. It also will send tens of billions in fresh aid to states.