



OREGON'S SENATOR JEFF MERKLEY

Coronavirus Resources: Individuals

American Rescue Plan

Oregon's U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley pushed for passage of President Biden's *American Rescue Plan* to get stimulus checks in Americans' bank accounts, help Main Street businesses stay afloat, and save the unemployment insurance program that 20 million Americans are relying on to make ends meet.

With this bill, urgently needed resources will be delivered to state, local, and tribal governments so they support the health of communities, and also pay firefighters, first responders, and other critical employees. Resources will go to schools and educators so they can safely get students back in the classroom. Resources will go to struggling families who are balancing work, school, and childcare from home. Resources will get personal protective equipment in the hands of frontline health heroes. And resources will mobilize a massive, national vaccine distribution plan to get shots into arms, and get past this pandemic.

Individual Resources in the Bill

Stimulus Checks:

- \$1,400 for individuals, phased out at \$75,000 to \$80,000 for individuals, at \$150,000 to \$160,000 for joint filers.

Paid Leave:

- An additional 15 weeks of paid leave (capped at \$1,400 per week) for federal workers for leave related to the pandemic, including caregiving as a result of school closures.
- Tax credits to employers to voluntarily offer two weeks of additional paid sick leave for an employee with COVID-19, and 10 weeks of paid family leave, through September 30, 2021, for pandemic-related caregiving or appointments.
 - Employers are not required to provide this voluntary additional leave.
- Expansion of the credits to allow 501(c)(1) government organizations to make use of paid leave tax credits.

Unemployment:

- Extends unemployment eligibility until September 6, 2021, for a total of 79 weeks of unemployment insurance, including for those who receive Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation.
 - The change includes an additional federal payment of \$300 per week on top of state-authorized unemployment benefits.
- Makes the first \$10,200 of unemployment received during 2020 tax free for households that report less than \$150,000 in 2020.
- Newly eligible recipients may be able to retroactively qualify for coronavirus-related UI payments dating back to January 27, 2020.

Child Tax Credit:

- The bill expands the Child Tax Credit (CTC), and from July through December 2021, partially pays out the benefit on a monthly basis, based on 2019 or 2020 tax return information.
- For single taxpayers earning up to \$75,000 and married couples earning up to \$150,000:
 - The CTC is expanded to \$3,600 for each child under 6.
 - The CTC is expanded to \$3,000 for each child between 6 to 17 years old (including 17-year-olds, up from the 16-year-old age cap).
 - The payments will be reduced for people with earnings above those thresholds.
- Families who earn too much to qualify for the expanded tax credits but less than \$200,000 for single taxpayers and \$400,000 for married couples can still claim the base \$2,000 credit for their children on their tax returns.
- From July through December 2021, the CTC will be partially paid out on a monthly basis, rather than claimed once per year when people file their tax returns. The other half of the CTC will be paid when families file their tax returns.
 - For example, a family whose income is below the threshold for the expanded CTC with two children under 6 would qualify for \$7,200 in CTC payments, with \$600 in monthly payments and the rest paid through their tax returns.

Pension Relief:

- \$86 billion in aid to struggling multiemployer and single employer pensions, covering 10.7 million active and retired workers.
- Provides direct cash assistance to struggling plans via the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation with help to ensure workers don't lose their pensions.
- Investments made with grant funds in struggling pension plans must be investment grade bonds in order to protect retirees.

For updates: Visit merkle.senate.gov/coronavirus for updates on these and other resources.