



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
CHAIRMAN RICHARD E. NEAL

Ways and Means Democrats in the 116th Congress

A RECORD OF ACTION AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



DECEMBER 2020

MAJORITY STAFF REPORT

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A Note from the Chairman:

In January 2019, Democrats assumed the majority in the House of Representatives with a bold vision to advance policies that expand opportunity for the American people. When I became Chair of the Ways and Means Committee, I laid out a clear set of priorities. Our Committee would fight for tax policies that are fair to working families and small businesses. We would develop innovative solutions to rebuild our infrastructure. We would push to strengthen Social Security and Medicare. And we would propose new ways for Americans to save for retirement and access affordable health care, all while restoring integrity to the federal government.



Despite the government shutdown at the outset of the 116th Congress, Ways and Means Democrats hit the ground running and swiftly began to execute our mission. The Committee passed legislation to lower prescription drug prices, end surprise medical billing, increase Americans' retirement savings, redesign the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), improve workers' knowledge of the Social Security benefits they have earned, reduce the number of children requiring placement in foster homes, and provide expanded tax credits to low-wage workers and middle-class families. Our members were instrumental in the improvement and passage of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. This new North American trade deal includes strong provisions for workers, significant protections for the environment, and the best enforcement mechanisms ever seen in a U.S. trade agreement.

We conducted robust oversight of the Trump Administration, fighting against discriminatory regulations, rooting out corruption, and shining light on undue political influence in the federal government. As part of our examination of the mandatory presidential audit program, I used my authority under the tax code to request President Trump's tax returns. When the administration failed to fulfil both that request and subsequent subpoenas for the information, I took the matter to court, where the Committee continues to pursue the case.

In 2020, the world turned upside down. The coronavirus caused a devastating public health emergency and a severe economic depression. The killing of Black men and women at the hands of law enforcement prompted a swell of cries for racial justice as Americans in communities large and small across the nation took to the streets in protest. In the midst of this societal reckoning and the COVID-19 pandemic, America suffered another punch to the gut: our dear colleague and civil rights hero John Lewis passed away.

Though we shared in the nation's collective mourning and anguish as these multiple crises gripped the country, Ways and Means members buckled down and got to work. The Committee contributed central provisions to a series of COVID-19 relief bills. The measures our members authored helped unemployed workers stay afloat, families remain in their homes, small businesses keep employees on payroll, and first responders access the

protective gear they need to stay safe. While taking action to crush the virus and reenergize the economy, Ways and Means Democrats also examined longstanding inequities in America that the COVID-19 crisis exposed and exacerbated.

As I write this, many of the most difficult challenges of 2020 persist. Due to Senate Republicans' inaction, crucial House-passed relief packages never became law. Virus cases are climbing again, and the economic recovery shows signs of slowing. Despite these setbacks, hope is on the horizon. Next year, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will be sworn in as President and Vice President of the United States. Leadership that trusts science and abhors racism will return to the White House. Democrats retained control of the House and may succeed in unseating the Republican majority in the Senate. Ways and Means Democrats will continue to build on the foundation we laid in the 116th Congress to bring health and prosperity to the American people. Our best days are ahead of us.

Sincerely,

Richard E. Neal

Remembering Congressman John Lewis

On July 17, 2020, the nation lost a civil rights hero and champion for justice, Congressman John Lewis. Rep. Lewis served in Congress for more than 30 years and was Chairman of the Ways and Means Oversight Subcommittee at the time of his passing. Members of the Committee joined with millions of Americans in mourning his death, celebrating his life, and vowing to continue his critical, unfinished work.



John was the bravest, yet most gentle person I ever met. He nearly lost his life in pursuit of justice and confronted some of the darkest facets of our society, but he never lost his faith in what America could become. His unyielding optimism and hope lifted the spirits of his fellow members of Congress and the American people in our nation's most trying times. With quiet strength, grace, and love, he shouldered unthinkable burdens and changed the world for the better. Through it all, he was unfailingly humble, selfless, and kind.

— **Chairman Richard E. Neal**

I grew up a daughter of Selma, Alabama, and I also am a lifetime member of Brown Chapel AME Church. I grew up watching John come back year after year to reenact Bloody Sunday. And to think that I could grow up and one day be the first Black woman to represent Alabama and to have the opportunity to thank that living legend, who I owe my very political existence to, and to get to know him as a friend is just – I'm blessed, and I feel so honored to have had the opportunity to get to know John and to get to thank John. Because of his struggle and the freedom fighters and those who crossed that bridge and dared to make America live up to its ideals, I get to now walk the halls of Congress. And so many African American elected officials owe their existence to John...We're just so grateful for his eternal light that shines so bright, and it was always hopeful in the search of that beloved community.

— **Congresswoman Terri Sewell**

Few men ever achieve what John Lewis has in his life, and few men do so while genuinely caring about every single person they meet. When I joined the Ways and Means Committee as a new member, John made a point to make me feel welcome. Despite all that he had accomplished in his life, John was never too busy or too important for you. John made such a profound impact on all of us because his kindness, humility, and gentle strength were rooted in his nature. He understood that his life's work could never be finished, and he never missed an opportunity to inspire younger generations to carry that work forward.

— **Congresswoman Linda Sánchez**



John was the conscience of the Congress and my friend. When John rose to speak, others always listened. Sometimes speaking in a whisper, and other times in a roar, John's voice always brought moral clarity and purpose. John encouraged us all to get into 'good trouble' in the pursuit of justice and equality. As a civil rights leader, John was nearly beaten to death on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Later, as a distinguished Member of Congress, he would lead an annual congressional delegation across the same bridge in Selma, to remind the world that the fight for civil rights was not over. Having the chance to walk with John across the Edmund Pettus Bridge will always be one of my most cherished memories.

— Congressman Dan Kildee



Democratic Members of the Ways and Means Committee in the 116th Congress

Chairman Richard E. Neal – MA-01

John Lewis – GA-05 (through 7/17/20)

Lloyd Doggett – TX-35

Mike Thompson – CA-05

John B. Larson – CT-01

Earl Blumenauer – OR-03

Ron Kind – WI-03

Bill Pascrell, Jr. – NJ-09

Danny K. Davis – IL-07

Linda T. Sánchez – CA-38

Brian Higgins – NY-26

Terri A. Sewell – AL-07

Suzan DelBene – WA-01

Judy Chu – CA-27

Gwen Moore – WI-04

Dan Kildee – MI-05

Brendan Boyle – PA-02

Don Beyer – VA-08

Dwight Evans – PA-03

Brad Schneider – IL-10

Tom Suozzi – NY-03

Jimmy Panetta – CA-20

Stephanie Murphy – FL-07

Jimmy Gomez – CA-34

Steven Horsford – NV-04

Cedric Richmond – LA-02 (as of 9/22/2020)



In Focus: A Commitment to Witness Diversity

At the outset of the 116th Congress, Chairman Neal made it a priority of the Committee's to explore the causes of our nation's economic and health inequities. As part of that effort, he took steps to ensure Ways and Means heard from voices that reflect the population of today's America. The Committee added a diverse group of new Democratic members, expanded its staff to include talented individuals from a range of different backgrounds, and made sure that nearly 60 percent of hearing witnesses were either people of color and/or women.

In the 116th Congress:

- 43 out of 99 witnesses at full Committee hearings were either people of color and/or women
- 21 out of 26 witnesses at Health Subcommittee hearings were either people of color and/or women
- 19 out of 26 witnesses at Trade Subcommittee hearings were either people of color and/or women
- 16 out of 31 witnesses at Select Revenue Measures Subcommittee hearings were either people of color and/or women
- 10 out of 19 witnesses at Oversight Subcommittee hearings were either people of color and/or women
- 27 out of 29 witnesses at Worker and Family Support Subcommittee hearings were either people of color and/or women
- 15 out of 23 witnesses at Social Security Subcommittee hearings were either people of color and/or women



Witnesses at a full Committee hearing on legislative proposals for paid family and medical leave

HEALTH



Health Subcommittee Chairman Lloyd Doggett presides over a hearing on promoting competition to lower Medicare drug prices

In 2018, Democrats retook the majority of the House of Representatives during an election cycle in which voters cited health care as the most important issue in their lives. Understanding the priority Americans place on strengthening our nation's health care system, Ways and Means members immediately got to work in the 116th Congress to improve access to high-quality, affordable health care in every community. The Committee passed measures to reduce prescription drug prices, fund and expand critical Medicare programs, end surprise medical billing, combat the opioid crisis, and build on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to improve access to health insurance coverage and protect American with pre-existing conditions.

In the United States, prescription drug prices are on average four times higher than in other comparable countries, and in some cases much higher. After years of congressional inaction on the skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs, the House of Representatives passed the Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act, which allows the Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary to negotiate lower prescription prices and caps Medicare beneficiaries' out-of-pocket spending on prescription drugs at \$2,000. Additionally, over two-thirds of Medicare beneficiaries currently lack access to any dental, vision, and hearing coverage. The Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act also strengthens Medicare by including dental, vision, and hearing coverage for nearly 60 million Americans. The majority of Medicare beneficiaries stand to gain from the addition of these three critical benefits.

Ways and Means members also took action to improve transparency in the health care system. The Committee passed the bipartisan Prescription Drug STAR Act, legislation that brings sunlight across the health care supply chain, from pharmaceutical manufacturers to pharmacy benefit managers, to help reduce costs for families. Committee Democrats led the passage of the Transparency in Health Care Investments Act, which requires private equity firms that own and control medical care providers to report certain information. Increasingly, private equity firms are investing in areas such as emergency departments, ambulatory surgery centers, trauma units, nursing homes and hospitals, as well as health insurance



companies. This reporting will enable policy makers and regulators to better understand private equity's effects on the health system and patients' care and costs.

To shield patients from surprise medical bills, the Committee passed the bipartisan Consumer Protections Against Surprise Medical Bills Act of 2020, which provides greater transparency, protects patients from balance bills, enhances consumer protections, and empowers patients with information about their health care costs. That legislation helped lay the groundwork for a multi-committee, bipartisan, bicameral plan to end surprise medical billing, which passed Congress in December 2020 as part of an end-of-year COVID relief and omnibus spending package. Patients are now protected from surprise medical bills, and payment disputes will be resolved between health care providers and health insurance companies using a new, fair framework.

After a number of hearings highlighting the challenges of delivering health care in rural and underserved areas and exploring policy options that could improve outcomes and care in these communities, Ways and Means members launched the Rural and Underserved Communities Health Task Force to bring more focus and attention to these issues and solutions. A bipartisan group of four co-chairs led the new effort: Rep. Danny K. Davis (D-IL), Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL), Rep. Brad Wenstrup (R-OH), and Rep. Jodey Arrington (R-TX).

Legislation Passed out of Committee

H.R. 2113, Prescription Drug Sunshine, Transparency, Accountability and Reporting (STAR) Act of 2019

H.R. 3417, The Beneficiary Education Tools, Telehealth, and Extenders Reauthorization Act of 2019

H.R. 3429, The HEARTS and Rural Relief Act

H.R. 3436, The Improving Chronic Care Management Act

H.R. 3414, The Opioid Workforce Act of 2019

H.R. 3439, The Protecting Access to Information for Effective and Necessary Treatment (PATIENTS) Act of 2019

H.R. 3, The Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Act Now of 2019
*Also passed in the full House of Representatives

H.R. 4650, The Medicare Dental Act of 2019

H.R. 4665, The Medicare Vision Act of 2019

H.R. 4618, The Medicare Hearing Act of 2019

H.R. 4716, The Inhaler Coverage and Access Now (I CAN) Act



H.R. 1922, The Restoring Access to Medication Act of 2019

H.R. 3708, The Primary Care Enhancement Act of 2019

H.R. 5821, The "HOSPICE" Act

H.R. 5825, The Transparency in Health Care Investments Act of 2020

H.R. 5826, The Consumer Protections Against Surprise Medical Bills Act

Hearings

Protecting Americans with Pre-Existing Conditions

January 29, 2019

The Cost of Rising Prescription Drug Prices

February 12, 2019

Promoting Competition to Lower Medicare Drug Prices

Mar 7, 2019

Overcoming Racial Disparities and Social Determinants in the Maternal Mortality Crisis

May 16, 2019

Protecting Patients from Surprise Medical Bills

May 21, 2019

Pathways to Universal Health Coverage

June 12, 2019

Investing in the U.S. Health System by Lowering Drug Prices, Reducing Out-of-Pocket Costs, and Improving Medicare Benefits

October 17, 2019

Caring for Aging Americans

November 14, 2019

More Cures for More Patients: Overcoming Pharmaceutical Barriers

February 5, 2020

Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget with Health and Human Services Secretary Azar

February 27, 2020



In Focus: Health-Related Committee Reports

A Painful Pill to Swallow: U.S. vs. International Prescription Drug Prices

In September 2019, shortly after House Democrats unveiled H.R. 3 – landmark legislation to lower prescription costs in the United States – Ways and Means Committee Democratic staff released a report finding that U.S. drug prices are nearly four times higher than the combined average of 11 other similar countries, and that Americans pay as much as 67 times more than consumers in other nations for prescription drugs, even when accounting for rebates. To reach these conclusions, Committee staff analyzed the 2018 pricing data of 79 drugs sold in the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Canada (Ontario), Australia, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Switzerland. The analysis in “A Painful Pill to Swallow: U.S. vs. International Prescription Drug Prices” also found that the United States could save \$49 billion annually on Medicare Part D alone by using average drug prices for other countries.

Under-Enforced and Over-Prescribed: The Antipsychotic Drug Epidemic Ravaging America’s Nursing Homes

In July 2020, Ways and Means Committee Democratic staff released a report exposing the longstanding misuse of antipsychotics and the minimal enforcement in preventing patient harm in nursing homes nationwide. “Under-Enforced and Over-Prescribed: The Antipsychotic Drug Epidemic Ravaging America’s Nursing Homes” shows how many facilities resort to the use of these potentially dangerous drugs in lieu of proper staffing and underscores the urgent need for robust oversight of the nursing home industry and improved deployment of existing tools to prevent such harm in the first place. The Trump Administration has underutilized the oversight tools at its disposal despite the Food and Drug Administration issuing a black box warning against the use of antipsychotics for elderly patients with dementia.

Key findings from the report include:

- Approximately 20 percent of all skilled nursing facility residents in the United States – about 298,650 people every week – received some form of antipsychotic medication in the fourth quarter of 2019, while only about two percent had qualifying conditions for such drugs.
- Citations for antipsychotic misuse in SNFs increased by 200 percent between 2015 and 2017 but declined by 22 percent from 2017 to 2018 as the Trump Administration rolled back Obama-era protections.
- Ten percent of citations associated with classifications of “Actual Harm” or “Immediate Jeopardy” to a resident’s health or safety resulted in no fine from 2017-2018.



In Focus: Health Related Committee Reports (Cont.)

Left Out: Barriers to Health Equity for Rural and Underserved Communities

To inform its work, the Rural and Underserved Communities Health Task Force engaged outside stakeholders and received nearly 200 responses to a request for information soliciting input. Democratic Committee staff took those responses into account as part of their broader review that led to the creation of a July 2020 report entitled “Left Out: Barriers to Health Equity for Rural and Underserved Communities.” The report analyzes the barriers to health care in underserved communities and discusses the challenges associated with scalable and sustainable solutions.

The report presents an honest, holistic analysis of the many cross-sector and historically rooted challenges facing residents of underserved communities. From massive geographic coverage deficiencies to structural environmental factors, the report examines the realities millions of Americans face that adversely affect their health. The report also takes a close look at how these challenges are byproducts of systemic racism and economic inequality. Using new qualitative analysis to help inform the current debate, the report identifies broad social, structural, and health inequities facing both rural and urban underserved communities and should serve as a call to action for policymakers in Congress and across the country. The report also includes state-by-state health equity maps to provide more targeted and local understanding of the issues.



TRADE



Subcommittee Chairman Earl Blumenauer and Mexican President Andres Manuel López Obrador discuss the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement in Mexico City, Mexico

As the House Committee with jurisdiction over matters related to international trade, Ways and Means explored a variety of pressing issues related to U.S. global competitiveness, the ways U.S. trade policy can benefit American workers, supply chains, trade enforcement, and the U.S.-China trade and economic dynamic. Members examined the Trump Administration's haphazard tariff policies, reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to the World Trade Organization (WTO), condemned labor abuses around the world, and led the reauthorization of the U.S. Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act.

One of the most notable Committee achievements in the 116th Congress was the passage of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), a deal Ways and Means Democrats transformed to respect the dignity of workers, contain meaningful enforcement provisions, and prioritize environmental protection and remediation. When the President initially sought congressional approval for a renegotiated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Ways and Means Democrats made clear that the Trump Administration's modestly modified "new" NAFTA had no chance of passage without substantial improvements to satisfy Democrats' longstanding criticisms and objections. After six months of intensive negotiations, in December 2019, the House passed the implementing bill for a renegotiated USMCA with strengthened worker and environmental protections, rules to promote constituents' access to life-saving medicines, and new and enhanced enforcement mechanisms, including for the labor and environmental provisions. Ninety percent of House members voted for the USMCA Implementation Act. In fact, Democratic support for the USMCA exceeded Republican support: 193 Democratic votes in favor, compared to 192 Republican votes, demonstrating bipartisanship that once regularly advanced trade bills.



Legislation Passed out of Committee

H. Res. 746, A Resolution to Support and Reform the World Trade Organization (WTO)

H.R. 5430, United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement Implementation Act

*Also passed in the full House of Representatives and the Senate, and is now Public Law No: 116-113

Hearings

U.S.-China Trade

February 27, 2019

Trade and Labor: Creating and Enforcing Rules to Benefit American Workers

March 26, 2019

Enforcement in the New NAFTA

May 22, 2019

The 2019 Trade Policy Agenda: Negotiations with China, Japan, the EU, and UK; new NAFTA/USMCA; U.S. Participation in the WTO; and other matters

June 19, 2019

Mexico's Labor Reform: Opportunities and Challenges for an Improved NAFTA

June 25, 2019

U.S.-Japan Trade Agreements

November 20, 2019

Trade Infrastructure for Global Competitiveness

February 6, 2020

U.S.-China Trade and Competition

February 26, 2020

The 2020 Trade Policy Agenda

June 17, 2020

The Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act: Considerations for Renewal

September 10, 2020

Enforcing the Ban on Imports Produced by Forced Labor in Xinjiang

September 17, 2020



In Focus: Congressional Delegation Travel

Many Ways and Means members participated in congressional delegation (CODEL) travel around the world to advance the Committee's work and U.S. trade policy.

To inform their consideration of the renegotiated NAFTA, Ways and Means CODELs traveled to both Canada and Mexico for meetings with government officials, environmental experts, and workers and labor leaders. Subcommittee Chairman Blumenauer led a July 2019 trip to Mexico, where the delegation met with President Andres Manuel López Obrador, as well as Foreign Secretary Marcelo Ebrard, Economy Secretary Graciela Marquez, Secretary of Labor Luisa Alcalde, and Environment Secretary Victor Manuel Toledo in Mexico City. The members spoke directly to Mexican workers in San Luis Potosi, hearing about workplace conditions and treatment, the challenges to democratically unionizing in Mexico, and the need for significant reforms and new protections for workers. The delegation spent time in Tijuana as well, where they learned about the North American Development Bank's efforts to improve environmental conditions and border infrastructure to address waste water problems. The group also met with representatives from the State Water Commission, inspected environmental conditions at sites along the Tijuana River, and toured a water treatment plant.

Ways and Means Chairman Neal led two CODELs related to the NAFTA renegotiation as well – one to Mexico City in October 2019, and one to Ottawa, Canada in November 2019. While in Mexico, the delegation met with President López Obrador and several cabinet members to assess the nation's ability to follow through on promised reforms and implement the legal, institutional, and cultural changes in accordance with Mexico's laws and the renegotiated agreement's requirements. Members also took time to speak directly with Mexican workers and Mexican labor leaders about their experiences in the workplace and the labor protections and reforms they believe are most critical. The November delegation to Canada met with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland to discuss Democrats' negotiations with the Trump Administration and emphasize the importance of meaningful enforcement mechanisms that ensure the protection of workers in all three nations and of the countries' shared environment.

Other CODEL travel included Rep. Dwight Evans' August 2019 trip to participate in the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) forum in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and Rep. Ron Kind and Rep. Don Beyer's September 2019 delegation to Geneva, Switzerland to meet with officials from the World Trade Organization regarding WTO modernization and trade war de-escalation.



TAX



Select Revenue Measures Subcommittee Chairman Mike Thompson leads a hearing on how middle-class families are faring in today's economy

Through legislative action and incisive hearings, Ways and Means Democrats worked to create a fairer, simpler tax code that offers Americans greater opportunity and financial security. In 2019, the Committee passed the most significant pro-work, poverty-reducing tax bill in at least a decade. Benefitting residents of all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and other U.S. territories, the Economic Mobility Act would provide an important economic boost for low-wage workers and middle-class families. Recognizing the fiscal burdens that the 2017 Republican tax law imposed on state and local governments and millions of middle-class families, the Ways and Means Committee advanced the Restoring Tax Fairness for States and Localities Act, which partially restored the state and local tax deduction and expanded tax benefits for teachers and first responders, and the measure passed the full House on December 19, 2019. Ways and Means also contributed key provisions to House Democrats' infrastructure package, the Moving Forward Act, including the largest tax investment in combatting climate change ever passed in the House of Representatives.

The Committee took notable steps in the 116th Congress to help American workers of all ages prepare for a financially secure retirement. The SECURE Act, bipartisan Ways and Means legislation that expands opportunities for Americans to increase their retirement savings and improves the portability of lifetime income options from one plan to another, passed both the House and Senate and became law at the end of 2019. The House also passed the Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act, a bipartisan Ways and Means bill to protect workers and retirees relying on failing multiemployer pension plans. In October of 2020, Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady also introduced the Securing a Strong Retirement Act of 2020 bipartisan legislation building off the progress achieved with the SECURE Act.

Fifty years after the Stonewall riots, the House of Representatives passed Ways and Means legislation called the PRIDE Act, which updates the tax code to clarify that all federal tax provisions respecting marriage will apply to legally married same-sex couples in the same manner as other married couples. The Committee also advanced bipartisan legislation to impose a nicotine excise tax, which would increase e-cigarette pricing in an effort to discourage youth and young adults from purchasing items like Juul pods. This important work was a crucial piece of the Protecting American Lungs and Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2020, which passed the House in February of 2020.



Throughout the 116th Congress, the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures trained the attention and awareness of the Committee and the House of Representatives on the economic challenges facing middle-class American families both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through hearings, bipartisan virtual roundtables, and virtual working sessions within the caucus, members heard perspectives from leading national economists, trade association representatives, small business owners, essential workers, labor organizers, displaced restaurant workers, parents who lost their jobs due to the pandemic, and ordinary Americans struggling to keep up with expenses. Their advice, insights and needs shaped and galvanized the Committee's efforts to support working families and all those struggling as a result of the pandemic.

Legislation Passed out of Committee

H.R. 1994, Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act of 2019

*Also passed in the full House of Representatives and the Senate, and is now Public Law

H.R. 3299, The Promoting Respect for Individuals' Dignity and Equality (PRIDE) Act of 2019

*Also passed in the full House of Representatives

H.R. 3300, The Economic Mobility Act of 2019

H.R. 3301, The Taxpayer Certainty and Disaster Tax Relief Act of 2019

H.R. 397, The Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act of 2019

*Also passed in the full House of Representatives

H.R.4742, Protecting American Lungs Act of 2019

H.R. 5377, The Restoring Tax Fairness for States and Localities Act

*Also passed in the full House of Representatives

Hearings

Improving Retirement Security for America's Workers

February 6, 2019

Hearing on How Middle-Class Families are Faring in Today's Economy

February 13, 2019

Our Nation's Crumbling Infrastructure and the Need for Immediate Action

March 6, 2019

Temporary Policy in the Internal Revenue Code

March 12, 2019



The President's Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Proposal with U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin
March 14, 2019

The 2017 Tax Law and Who It Left Behind
March 27, 2019

The Economic and Health Consequences of Climate Change
May 15, 2019

How Recent Limitations to the SALT Deduction Harm Communities, Schools, First Responders, and Housing Values
June 25, 2019

Members' Day Hearing Focused on the Recent Changes Made to the Federal Tax Treatment of State and Local Taxes
June 25, 2019

Paving the Way for Funding and Financing Infrastructure Investments
January 29, 2020

The Disappearing Corporate Income Tax
February 11, 2020

The Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Budget with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin
March 3, 2020

Select Revenue Measures Subcommittee Hearing on Examining the Impact of the Tax Code on Native American Tribes
March 4, 2020



In Focus: Addressing the Multiemployer Pension Crisis

When Congressman Neal became Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee at the beginning of the 116th Congress in January 2019, the very first bill he introduced was the bipartisan Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act, legislation commonly referred to as the Butch Lewis Act that would address the nation's worsening multiemployer pension crisis. More than a million Americans participate in multiemployer pension plans that are quickly running out of money. This bipartisan legislation aims to save the retirement savings of workers and retirees who – year after year – gave up wage increases in order to fund their pension plans.

On July 10, 2019, Chairman Neal held a rally in support of the bill with General President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters James Hoffa; Rita Lewis, who is an advocate, Central States Pension Plan beneficiary, and widow of Butch Lewis; and more than 100 workers and retirees whose savings are at risk due to the multiemployer pension crisis. Following the rally, attendees poured into the Ways and Means Committee room to witness Committee passage of the legislation. Later that month, on July 24, the full House of Representatives passed the bill as well. While the Senate has failed to take up the measure, the multiemployer pension issue remains a top priority of Chairman Neal's looking ahead to the 117th Congress.



OVERSIGHT



Oversight Subcommittee Chairman John Lewis leads a hearing on how the tax code subsidizes hate

The late Chairman John Lewis led the Oversight Subcommittee until his passing in July 2020. In September 2020, Representative Bill Pascrell was named Chairman of the Subcommittee. Together, they led the Committee's vigorous oversight agenda this Congress.

Ways and Means pursued a robust oversight agenda in the 116th Congress, tackling issues ranging from taxpayer fairness, maximizing health coverage, gun violence, discrimination in the foster care system, the tax-exempt status of hate groups, the tax return filing season, disclosure of certain candidates' tax returns, IRS operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, problems related to the 2017 Republican tax law, and IRS implementation of coronavirus response legislation, including the distribution of Economic Impact Payments. In hearings, members received compelling testimony from an array of witnesses, including a survivor of the Pulse Nightclub shooting, community activists, family members of gun violence victims, and the National Taxpayer Advocate. Notably, the Taxpayer First Act, bipartisan, bicameral legislation to redesign the IRS led by Oversight Subcommittee Chairman John Lewis, passed both the House and Senate and became law in 2019.

As part of the Committee's oversight work to review the IRS's mandatory presidential audit program, Chairman Neal used his authority under section 6103(f) of the Internal Revenue Code to request six years of President Trump's personal and business tax returns. After the Treasury Department and the IRS denied the request, Chairman Neal issued subpoenas for the information in question. The Trump Administration also failed to comply with the subpoenas, causing the Ways and Means Committee to file a complaint in federal court to obtain the materials. The case remains tied up in the courts, but Chairman Neal expressed confidence that the law is on the Committee's side and that Ways and Means will ultimately prevail.



Legislation Passed out of Committee

H.R. 1957, The Taxpayer First Act of 2019

*Also passed in the full House of Representatives and the Senate, and is now Public Law No: 116-25

Hearings

Legislative Proposals and Tax Law Related to Presidential and Vice-Presidential Tax Returns

February 7, 2019

Hearing with the National Taxpayer Advocate on the IRS Filing Season

March 7, 2019

Understanding the Tax Gap and Taxpayer Noncompliance

May 9, 2019

How the Tax Code Subsidizes Hate

September 19, 2019

The Public Health Consequences and Costs of Gun Violence

September 26, 2019

Taxpayer Fairness

October 13, 2020

Maximizing Health Coverage Enrollment Amidst Administration Sabotage

October 20, 2020

Hearing with the Internal Revenue Service Commissioner

November 20, 2020



In Focus: The Taxpayer First Act

In March 2019, Subcommittee Chairman John Lewis led the introduction of the bipartisan, bicameral Taxpayer First Act of 2019, legislation redesigning the IRS for the first time in more than 20 years to better serve taxpayers. The bill was the culmination of numerous Ways and Means Committee hearings and roundtable discussions on how best to improve the IRS. Included in the legislation were protections for low-income taxpayers, practical enforcement reforms, and upgraded assistance for taxpayers and small businesses. The Taxpayer First Act passed the House of Representatives on June 10, passed the Senate on June 13, and received the President's signature to become law on July 1, 2019.

During consideration of the legislation on the House floor, Chairman Lewis said the following:

Mr. Speaker, despite every single challenge, we remained committed to bipartisanship and to the American taxpayer. I want to share a few examples of the good this bill does. The Taxpayer First Act authorizes \$30 million in matching grants for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program which helps low- and moderate-income taxpayers complete and file their taxes. This bill also protects certain low-income taxpayers from the private debt collection program. In addition, some of the most popular parts of the bill include new initiatives to protect and serve taxpayers who are victims of identity theft. Mr. Speaker, the Taxpayer First Act serves as an example of a good and thoughtful policy that Congress can produce. We took our time. We studied, and we stayed the course. We refused to give up, and we refused to give in. Mr. Speaker, this bill should be an inspiration to us all.



WORKER AND FAMILY SUPPORT



Worker and Family Support Subcommittee Chairman Danny K. Davis speaks on the importance of unemployment insurance

With jurisdiction over a range of critical supports for workers, children, and families, Ways and Means Democrats addressed a variety of related matters during the 116th Congress, including paid family and medical leave, child poverty, reemployment services, child care, barriers to work, and discrimination in the foster care system.

The Committee passed legislation to make the successful Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) program available to workers in all 50 states, tribal communities, and the U.S. territories. HPOGs are a proven approach to train workers for in-demand health jobs while providing key work supports like child care and transportation. Not only do HPOGs help struggling Americans get good jobs, they also strategically address the country's health worker shortage.

As part of the 2019 end-of-year spending package, the House and Senate both passed the Family First Transition Act (FFTA), legislation introduced in the House by a bipartisan group of Ways and Means members, building on the Committee's long tradition of working across the aisle to keep children safely at home. The FFATA helps states fully utilize the Family First Prevention Services Act, which was enacted in 2018, to transform their child welfare systems to keep more children safely at home, instead of placing them in foster care. Now law, the measure strengthens state-level child welfare programs, reduces the need for foster care, and improves outcomes for kids and their parents.



Legislation Passed out of Committee

H.R. 1759, Building on Reemployment Improvements to Deliver Good Employment for Workers (BRIDGE for Workers) Act

*Also passed in the full House of Representatives

H.R. 3298, The Child Care Quality and Access Act of 2019

H.R. 3398, The Pathways to Health Careers Act of 2019

*Also passed the full House of Representatives as part of H.R. 3

Legislation that Passed the House Without Going through the Committee Process:

H.R. 430, The TANF Extension Act of 2019

H.R. 2940, A one-quarter extension of TANF and CCES

H.R. 4768, The Home Visiting to Reduce Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Act

Hearings

Leveling the Playing Field for Working Families: Challenges and Opportunities

March 7, 2019

Paid Family and Medical Leave: Helping Workers and Employers Succeed

May 8, 2019

Celebrating Fathers and Families: Federal Support for Responsible Fatherhood

June 11, 2019

Legislative Proposals for Paid Family and Medical Leave

January 28, 2020

Combatting Child Poverty in America

March 11, 2020



In Focus: Committee Investigation into the Trump Administration’s Enabling of Discrimination within the Foster Care System

In August 2020, Ways and Means Democratic staff released a report – “Children at Risk: The Trump Administration’s Waiver of Foster Care Nondiscrimination Requirements” – revealing that the Trump Administration deliberately caused the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to fail its mandate to act in the best interest of abused and neglected children. In January of 2019, Worker and Family Support Subcommittee Chairman Danny K. Davis and then-Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight, the late John Lewis, launched an investigation into the Trump Administration’s granting of a waiver to South Carolina that allowed federal funds to be spent in a discriminatory manner within the state’s child welfare system.

As outlined in the report, the investigation found that:

- The waiver permitted discrimination within the child welfare system based on religion and sexual orientation, resulted in harm to LGBTQ children and families, and is not in the best interest of children; and
- HHS documents show that the waiver was driven by Trump Administration appointees who excluded policy experts from the decision-making process.

Child welfare experts agree that protections against discrimination are in the best interest of foster children. Yet HHS failed to consult with either internal or external experts to determine how the South Carolina waiver would affect vulnerable young people in the foster care system, even as internal agency documents reveal that staff recognized the negative consequences the waiver would have on LGBTQ children and foster families. Despite HHS’s failure to fulfill its constitutional responsibility to disclose complete information to the Ways and Means Committee during its congressional investigation, the Subcommittee Chairmen and staff were still able to uncover the agency’s failure to protect young people in their charge. The Committee also established that the South Carolina waiver set a precedent for further discrimination of and harm to individuals across the nation carried out by the Trump Administration.



SOCIAL SECURITY



Social Security Subcommittee Chairman John B. Larson presides over a hearing on legislative proposals to enhance Social Security

Democrats are firmly committed to protecting and improving Social Security benefits for Americans. In the 116th Congress, the Ways and Means Committee worked to ensure both current and future beneficiaries can rely on this vital support for years to come. Members examined ways to enhance the program, put forward strategies to improve the trust fund's solvency, advocated for the rights of Social Security Administration employees, and fought against harmful Trump Administration proposals that would deprive people with disabilities access to their earned benefits.

Shortly after assuming the House majority in 2019, the Social Security Subcommittee held a series of hearings on protecting and enhancing the program, and looked at ways improving benefits could strengthen the middle class. Ways and Means also held a legislative hearing on Subcommittee Chairman Larson's Social Security 2100 Act and passed legislation to enhance the public's understanding of the benefits they have earned.

Legislation Passed out of Committee

H.R. 5306, The Know Your Social Security Act

Hearings

Protecting and Improving Social Security: Enhancing Social Security to Strengthen the Middle Class

March 12, 2019

Protecting and Improving Social Security: Benefit Enhancements

March 13, 2019



Protecting and Improving Social Security: Comprehensive Legislative Proposals to Enhance Social Security

April 10, 2019

Legislative Hearing on the Social Security 2100 Act

July 25, 2019

In Focus: The Know Your Social Security Act

In December 2019, the Ways and Means Committee passed the Know Your Social Security Act, bipartisan legislation led by Subcommittee Chairman John B. Larson clarifying that the Social Security Administration must annually mail Social Security Statements to most working-age adults while also preserving the ability of a worker to choose to receive their yearly Statement electronically.

At the markup of the legislation, Chairman Neal noted that, “The Social Security Statement is an important retirement-planning tool, because it contains an individualized projection of the amount of benefits the worker will receive at retirement. It also shows projected disability and survivor benefits, helping to educate workers about these important protections that are part of Social Security. Finally, it helps prevent errors by showing workers their earnings history, so corrections can be made right away to ensure the accuracy of future Social Security benefits.”

Following the bill’s passage out of Committee, Subcommittee Chairman Larson noted the importance of Americans understanding “what benefits they are earning and can plan for their retirements and possible disability or death of a spouse or parent.” Larson also praised the Committee vote as “a good step forward showing Americans that Congress can work together, Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate.”



RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS

When the COVID-19 crisis struck the United States in the early spring of 2020, the Ways and Means Committee played a central role in crafting response legislation and finding solutions to address both the public health and economic emergencies plaguing the nation. Significant provisions in sweeping bipartisan bills, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and the end-of-year COVID relief package originated in the Committee. Ways and Means measures included the creation of economic impact payments; \$600 per week Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation payments; the Employee Retention Tax Credit, which encourages employers to keep employees on the payroll, receiving uninterrupted pay and benefits; billions of dollars of additional funding to support strained hospitals caring for coronavirus patients; and greater telehealth flexibility.

The Committee also held a series of virtual hearings and roundtables to address pressing issues related to the pandemic. Hearing topics included the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color; tax relief to support workers and families during the COVID-19 recession; the child care crisis and the coronavirus pandemic; and the COVID-19 nursing home crisis.



RELIEF PACKAGES

H.R. 6074, Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020

Passed the House and Senate, and became Public Law No: 116-123 on March 6, 2020

Ways and Means Committee members ensured the inclusion of emergency funding to improve preparedness, accelerate vaccine development, provide responding health workers with medical supplies, make low-interest loans available to affected small businesses, permit seniors to access telemedicine services for coronavirus treatment, and give support to Community Health Centers.

H.R. 6201, Families First Coronavirus Response Act

Passed the House and Senate, and became Public Law No: 116-127 on March 18, 2020

Ways and Means contributions included historic, emergency paid leave; free coronavirus testing, even for the uninsured; and the stabilization of the unemployment insurance system through administrative funding for state unemployment systems, additional extended benefits funding, and interest-free loans for state programs with depleted trust funds.

H.R. 748, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

Passed the House and Senate, and became Public Law No: 116-136 on March 27, 2020

Ways and Means contributions included:

- An additional \$600 per week for four months for any worker affected by COVID-19 and eligible for state or federal unemployment compensation (UC) benefits.
- Economic assistance payments of up to \$1,200 for eligible American adults, including for the lowest income taxpayers.
- Assistance for nonprofits, tribal governments, and state and local governments that pay the cost of UC benefits for their employees.
- Thirteen weeks of additional UC benefits for those who need them, in all states.
- Expanded eligibility to cover self-employed and "gig economy" workers, as well as individuals who couldn't start work due to COVID-19.
- Full federal funding for Short-term Compensation Programs, which allow struggling employers to enter into agreements with state UC programs to reduce employee hours and have them collect partial UC for the lost hours.
- An Employee Retention Tax Credit, which incentivizes employers – including nonprofits – to keep employees on the payroll, receiving uninterrupted pay and benefits.
- \$150 billion of additional funding to support strained hospitals caring for coronavirus patients.
- Free vaccines for individuals with insurance, when a vaccine becomes available.
- Telehealth flexibility, allowing Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Centers to bill directly for telehealth services during the coronavirus crisis.



H.R. 748, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (Cont.)

- A pause of the Medicare sequester during the duration of the COVID-19 emergency, giving Medicare providers an immediate two percent increase in their Medicare payments.
- Flexibility and relief for participants and retirees from retirement plan rules to allow for greater access to retirement savings during the crisis.

H.R. 6800, Heroes Act

Passed the House of Representatives on May 15, 2020

Ways and Means contributions included:

- A more robust Employee Retention Tax Credit, allowing an additional 60 million American workers – including 40 million employees of small businesses – to maintain critical lifelines and remain connected to their jobs, paychecks, and benefits during the crisis.
- A more substantial, second round of economic impact payments, and fixes to ensure that recipients include college students, non-child dependents, and Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) filers.
- An extension of the weekly \$600 federal unemployment compensation payments and unemployment benefits for self-employed and gig workers through January 31, 2021, as well as the continuation of important supports for state unemployment offices to ensure that workers receive their benefits.
- Fast, flexible funding to support child care – and adult day care for adults incapable of self-care – for essential workers on the job during the COVID crisis.
- Historic expansions to tax credits: making childless workers eligible for the earned income tax credit (EITC), expanding the refundability of the child tax credit (CTC) so that a greater number of low-income families can benefit, and doubling the child and dependent care tax credit (CDCTC).
- Emergency assistance for vulnerable children, families, and individuals, distributed using existing pathways to get resources to people in need quickly, including those who may not be receiving other assistance provided during the pandemic.
- The stabilization of pensions for more than 1 million Americans who participate in multiemployer plans, which are more rapidly approaching insolvency due to the COVID-19 crisis.
- Protections for seniors, surviving spouses, children, and people with severe disabilities from being forced to repay extra Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits they may have received because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



H.R. 2, Moving Forward Act

Passed the House of Representatives on July 1, 2020

Ways and Means contributions included:

- A five-year extension of existing green energy and efficiency incentives, new tax benefits for energy storage and offshore wind, and additional tax incentives for the deployment of zero emissions vehicles, modeled after Rep. Mike Thompson's GREEN Act.
- Reinstating Build America Bonds on a permanent basis to provide state and local governments with access to capital to finance infrastructure investments, increasing the allocation of private activity bonds, and applying prevailing wage requirements to the proceeds of certain federally subsidized bond proceeds.
- Expanded and improved tax incentives for low-income housing, including new benefits targeting rural and Native areas and individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Extending and expanding the New Markets Tax Credit program.
- A modification of the Historic Tax Credit to make the credit more accessible to project developers and an increase in the value of the credit for smaller projects.
- An extension of the Highway Trust Fund and related taxes.



H.R. 7327, Child Care for Economic Recovery Act

Passed the House of Representatives on July 29, 2020

Ways and Means contributions included:

- Increasing the value of the child and dependent care tax credit and making it fully refundable, allowing low-income families to access the full value of the benefit.
- Increasing the exclusion for employer-provided child care benefits and providing a payroll credit for child care expenses paid by employers.
- Tax relief for child care facilities affected by the pandemic and families employing domestic workers to help maintain critical child care infrastructure during the pandemic.



H.R. 7327, Child Care for Economic Recovery Act (Cont.)

- Flexibility for dependent care flexible spending arraignments allowing families to carry unused benefits over into 2021.
- Increasing the Child Care Entitlement to States by \$7.1 billion per year, for a total of \$10 billion, and boosting state budgets by waiving the state match requirement for increased funds during 2020 and 2021.
- Parlaying federal investments into better child care options for working families.
- Providing \$850 million to states, the District of Columbia, and all U.S. territories to immediately fill in gaps in dependent care for essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The authorization of \$10 billion to invest in infrastructure projects to improve child care safety, quality, and supply.

H.R. 925, Updated Heroes Act

Passed the House of Representatives on October 1, 2020

Ways and Means contributions to the updated Heroes Act closely resembled those in the original Heroes legislation. The Committee was responsible for several critical provisions, including the reinstatement and extension of emergency unemployment compensation, a variety of measures to tackle the public health crisis, a second round of direct payments, provisions to address the multiemployer pension crisis, and key tax credits that support workers, families, and small businesses.

H.R. 133, End-of-Year COVID Relief and Omnibus Spending Legislation

Passed the House and Senate on December 21, 2020, and became law on December 27, 2020

Ways and Means contributions included:

- Eleven weeks of \$300 per-week emergency unemployment benefits.
- An extension of expiring pandemic-related unemployment assistance, ensuring that beneficiaries of the programs who are unable to return safely to work will not exhaust the benefits before March 14, 2021.
- Protections for individuals who received pandemic-related unemployment benefit overpayments through no fault of their own and are now unable to repay the funds.
- A new round of direct cash assistance to provide relief to Americans who are struggling, with family members each receiving \$600.
- Expanded eligibility for the direct payments to include mixed-status families where one spouse has a Social Security Number (SSN). These families are eligible for the economic impact payment amount for each family member with an SSN, and can claim the corresponding amount for the first round of economic impact payments when they file their 2020 taxes.
- New protections for patients against surprise medical bills and the establishment of a fair framework to resolve payment disputes between health care providers and health insurance companies.



H.R. 133, End-of-Year COVID Relief and Omnibus Spending Legislation (Cont.)

- Flexibility that allows families who are eligible for the EITC and the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) and who experienced an income loss to use their 2019 income to determine these credits, putting more money in the pockets of working families.
- A reduction of the income threshold for medical expense deductions from 10 percent to 7.5 percent, ensuring that more medical expenses are properly deductible.
- Relief for employees with unused amounts in their health and dependent care flexible spending accounts by allowing for more expansive carryover and grace period policies.
- A three-month extension of credits reimbursing employers for paid sick and family leave paid to employees due to COVID-19.
- An increase in the income threshold at which the Lifetime Learning Credit phases out to help more students take advantage of the credit.
- More time for employees and employers to pay back deferred employee payroll tax amounts from the President's August memorandum.
- An extension, expansion, and significant improvement to the Employee Retention Tax Credit, offering a 70 percent credit on up to \$10,000 of wages per employee per quarter to help keep employees on payroll and connected with their jobs.
- Improved coordination between the Employee Retention Tax Credit and the Paycheck Protection Program, allowing access to both programs while preventing a double dip.
- Clarification that expenses paid with the proceeds of a forgiven PPP loan are deductible.
- An extension of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit for five years, helping employers continue to hire disadvantaged individuals.
- Expanded health care workforce training opportunities and the creation of 1,000 new Medicare medical residency positions directed for hospitals with the greatest need, as well as improvements in the rural training track and graduate medical education rotator programs to expand rural medical training opportunities.
- Critical support for providers during the continued COVID crisis, including a three-month delay of the Medicare sequester and a one-time payment to help physicians adjust to Medicare fee schedule changes.
- Important, overdue investments to simplify the Medicare enrollment process, lower beneficiary costs, and improve beneficiaries' access to affordable, comprehensive health care, including mental health telehealth treatment.
- Changes to Medicare specifically designed to support rural communities and ensure patients in those areas have access to health care services they need.
- A three-year increase and extension of funding for State Health Insurance Assistance Programs, which provide free insurance counseling and assistance for Medicare for beneficiaries.
- A lifeline to green energy investments with an extension of the investment tax credit for two years and the production tax credit for one year.
- Expanded tax incentives for offshore wind, waste heat to power property, and efficient biomass stoves.
- An incentive for energy efficient commercial buildings by making permanent the deduction for certain energy efficient property.



H.R. 133, End-of-Year COVID Relief and Omnibus Spending Legislation (Cont.)

- The extension of several other initiatives, including credits for energy efficient and renewable energy property for homeowners, new energy efficient homes, EV charging and fuel cell refueling stations, and certain zero-emissions vehicles.
- A down payment on funding the Elder Justice Act, legislation that includes key protections for American seniors, a population that has faced particular devastation during the COVID-19 pandemic, including a dedicated investment in state Adult Protective Services agencies.
- Improved quality and safety in skilled nursing facilities and hospices to better protect Medicare beneficiaries and other vulnerable populations.
- The Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act, which helps families stay together, keeps young people safe, and provides additional support for vulnerable youth affected by the COVID-19 crisis.
- The establishment of a four percent minimum credit rate for the low-income housing tax credit.
- A five-year extension of the New Markets Tax Credit at \$5 billion per year.
- Additional allocations of the low-income housing tax credit to states hit by natural disasters.
- Support for hard-hit beer, wine, and distilled spirits producers across the country by making the Craft Beverage Modernization Act permanent.

H.R. 9051, Caring for Americans with Supplemental Help (CASH) Act of 2020

Passed the House of Representatives on December 28, 2020

Chairman Neal introduced this Ways and Means legislation, which:

- Increases the value of the economic impact payments (EIPs) provided in the end-of-year COVID relief package so that each eligible family member receives \$2,000, up from \$600.
- Applies the same, broader eligibility established in the end-of-year package to mixed-status families where one spouse has a Social Security Number (SSN). As specified in the latest COVID relief legislation, these families are eligible for the EIP amount for each family member with an SSN, and can claim the corresponding amount for the first round of economic impact payments when they file their 2020 taxes.
- Expands eligibility for the second round of EIPs to include non-child dependents, and also allows those newly eligible family members to claim the corresponding amount for the first round of economic impact payments when they file their 2020 taxes.



HEARINGS

Continuing its tradition of leadership, on May 27, 2020, the Ways and Means Committee held the first official virtual committee hearing in the history of the House of Representatives. The hearing examined the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, and members heard from six witnesses, including Ibram X. Kendi, the Founding Director of the Antiracist Research & Policy Center at American University.

Chairman Neal explained in his opening statement that, “remote hearings certainly aren’t the same as sitting together in our Committee room, but this new authority has allowed us to continue to do our work on behalf of the American people while keeping our staff, families, and broader communities safe.” The hearing focused on the fact that the health consequences of COVID-19 are not felt evenly across American society, and the ways the virus has shone a light on the country’s centuries-old legacy of inequality. Chairman Neal noted that, “while the factors driving these inequities are complex and multifaceted, their impact on health outcomes have been clearly documented,” and added that, “we can save lives by understanding what communities of color need and then taking appropriate action.”

Throughout the remainder of 2020, the Committee continued to hold both hybrid and fully virtual hearings to tackle issues related to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Disproportionate Impact of COVID-19 on Communities of Color

May 27, 2020

Tax Relief to Support Workers and Families during the COVID-19 Recession

June 18, 2020

The Child Care Crisis and the Coronavirus Pandemic

June 23, 2020

Examining the COVID-19 Nursing Home Crisis

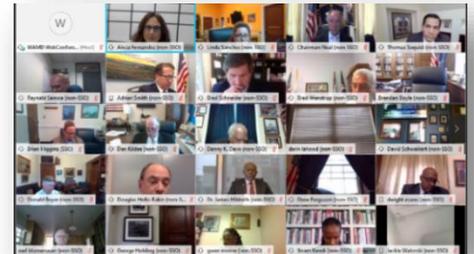
June 25, 2020

The Impact of COVID-19 on Social Security and its Beneficiaries

July 17, 2020

Trade, Manufacturing, and Critical Supply Chains: Lessons from COVID-19

July 23, 2020



Consequences of Inaction on COVID Tax Legislation
September 11, 2020

Save Our Social Security Now
September 24, 2020

Restaurants in America During the COVID-19 Pandemic
September 25, 2020



ROUNDTABLES

Chairman Neal Discussion with the United States Conference of Mayors on the COVID-19 Crisis and the Importance of Federal Funding for Cities and States
April 29, 2020

Child Care Roundtable with Chairman Neal, Congresswoman Jahana Hayes, Food Blogger Deb Perelman, and Working Mothers
July 24, 2020



Unemployment Insurance Listening Session with Unemployed Americans and Ways and Means Democrats
July 30, 2020

Rural and Underserved Communities Health Task Force Bipartisan Roundtable on Examining the Role of Telehealth during COVID-19 and Beyond
August 6, 2020

Listening Session with Workers Affected by the COVID-19 Crisis and Ways and Means Democrats
December 9, 2020



OVERSIGHT OF THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S COVID RESPONSE

In addition to passing legislation and convening hearings, a substantial piece of Ways and Means members' COVID response work was conducting oversight of the Trump Administration's implementation of policies related to the pandemic. From monitoring the disbursement of economic impact payments, to fighting to protect seniors in nursing homes, to insisting upon safe conditions for federal workers in agencies under the Committee's jurisdiction, Ways and Means Democrats kept close watch over the administration's haphazard handling of the crisis.

A sample of oversight actions Chairman Neal and Committee Democrats took are as follows:

Crushing the virus and protecting Americans' health

- Neal and DelBene Demand Answers from CMS Regarding Nursing Homes' Coronavirus Preparedness and Response
- Neal Raises Concerns Regarding Junk Insurance Plans' Deficient Coverage Furthering Coronavirus Spread
- Ways and Means Leaders Seek Additional Information from HHS Regarding Whistleblower Allegation
- Amid Shortages of Personal Protective Equipment, Chairman Neal Demands Answers from the Trump Administration
- Democratic Health Leaders Call on Trump Administration to Help Struggling Americans and Create Special Health Care Enrollment Period
- Neal, Grassley Call on USITC to Identify Imported Goods Related to COVID-19
- Neal and Pallone Demand Transparency into Methodology and Distribution of COVID-19 Health Care Provider Relief Funds
- Following Historic Hearing, Chairman Neal Questions HHS's Commitment to Eliminating COVID-19-Related Racial and Ethnic Disparities
- Democratic Health Leaders Demand Trump Administration Immediately Revisit Guidance Limiting COVID-19 Testing Coverage
- House Health Leaders Condemn Final Rule to Erode ACA Anti-Discrimination Protections
- Chairman Neal Calls on CMS to Ramp Up Oversight of Nursing Homes as Pandemic Continues to Devastate Long-Term Care Facilities
- Chairman Neal Demands Answers About HHS's Change to COVID-19 Data Reporting Process
- Neal, Nadler, Lofgren Call for Changes to Ease the Admission of Temporary Health Workers During the COVID-19 Emergency
- Chairman Neal Calls on Administrator Verma to Make COVID-19 Nursing Home Data More Reliable and Comprehensive
- Ways and Means and Senate Finance Request USITC Further Investigate COVID-Related Supply Chains
- Chairman Neal Calls on HHS to Release Details on Editorial Process Following Reports of Unprecedented Political Meddling in Public Health Analysis



- Democratic Health Leaders Question CMS's Unauthorized Use of Billions of Dollars from the Medicare Trust Funds
- Neal, Pascrell Slam Trump Administration's Decision to Block USPS Sending Reusable Face Masks to Americans
- Chairman Neal Calls on Secretary Azar to Ensure Vulnerable Populations Have Access to COVID-19 Vaccines

Supporting workers, families, and businesses through the COVID recession

- Neal, Wyden Urge SSA Commissioner to Reverse Telework Cutbacks Amid Coronavirus Outbreak
- Ways and Means Democrats Request IRS Provide Update on Coronavirus Impact on Filing Season
- Ways and Means Leaders Urge Social Security Administration to Safeguard Health and Minimize Disruptions Amid Coronavirus Crisis
- Neal, Scott, Wyden, Murray, Sánchez Call on DeVos to Return All Amounts Garnished from Federal Tax Refunds for Entire 2020 Filing Season
- Chairman Neal Calls on Free File Alliance to Help Non-Filers Access CARES Act Rebates
- Neal, Takano, Davis Urge Treasury and IRS to Automatically Issue Economic Impact Payments to Supplemental Security Income and Veterans Affairs Recipients
- Neal Requests the IRS Promptly Provide Public Briefing on Economic Impact Payments
- Ways and Means Democrats Urge Trump Administration to Prioritize Tribal Communities in Coronavirus Response Efforts
- Neal, Wyden, Grassley Push Treasury to Allow Small Businesses to Deduct PPP Expenses
- Ways and Means Democrats Demand Answers on the Use of Prepaid Debit Cards to Deliver Economic Impact Payments
- Neal, Lewis Request Weekly Reports from Treasury on Economic Impact Payments
- Neal, Pallone Call on CMS to Stop Nursing Facilities from Seizing Residents' Economic Impact Payments
- Neal, Lewis Urge IRS to Consider Relief for Taxpayers Receiving Outdated Balance Due Notices
- Following the Trump Administration's Refusal to Release Names of PPP Loan Recipients, Neal, Waters, Velázquez Demand Transparency
- Neal, Murphy Raise Concerns to DOL Regarding the Florida Unemployment System's COVID-19 Failures
- Amid Growing Concerns from Constituents, Neal, Lewis Urge IRS to Resolve Issues with Economic Impact Payments and Caution Against Delaying Payments Any Further
- House Democratic Committee Leaders Call on Treasury and SBA to Focus Remaining PPP Relief on Small, Minority-Owned Businesses
- Neal, Pressley Demand Answers and Action from Treasury on Racial Inequities in COVID-19 Response Implementation and Tax Code Administration
- Ways and Means Committee Leaders Call on Social Security Administration to Extend Relief to Overpaid Seniors and People with Disabilities



- Chairman Neal Calls on IRS to Stop Sending Tax Notices to Taxpayers Until the Agency Opens Backlogged Mail and Payments
- Neal Calls on IRS to Expedite Mailing of Notifications to Non-Filers Eligible for EIP



LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 117TH CONGRESS

In large part to Trump Administration mismanagement of pandemic response, the COVID-19 crisis will likely continue well into the 117th Congress. Ways and Means Democrats stand ready to continue leading congressional efforts to protect Americans' health, create jobs, and dig our economy out of the COVID recession. In close coordination with the Biden Administration's new leadership, the Committee will undoubtedly play a key role in helping workers and families recover from this perilous time in the nation's history.



