

Bill Highlights: H.R. 133 Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021

Community Health and Public Wellness Provisions

The recently-passed COVID-19 relief bill provides additional support during the pandemic and authorizes next year's federal spending, including items important to the health of our communities.

Provisions

Paycheck Protection Program Funds

Reopens the Paycheck Protection Program with updates that include:

- Expanding eligibility to more organizations, including housing cooperatives, direct marketing organizations and 501(c)(6) entities.
- Allowing borrowers to tailor their loan's coverage period to their individual business needs at any length between 8 and 24 weeks;
- Extending the PPP to cover additional expenses, including operations expenditures, property damage costs, suppliers and sourcing and employee protection costs;
- Providing greater flexibility for businesses with seasonal employees;
- Allowing borrowers to modify their first PPP loan amount and, in select circumstances, to file for a second PPP loan.

Food Security

- Increases monthly benefit levels for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by 15% through June 30, 2021.
- Excludes most pandemic assistance from being counted in determining household SNAP eligibility.
- Extends SNAP eligibility to college students who are either eligible for work study programs or have an expected family contribution of zero.

Key Highlights:

- **Financial Relief:** Provides \$600 direct payments to those with an annual income not exceeding \$75,000; extends Paycheck Protection Program to new (and some existing) borrowers.
- **Unemployment:** Raises the maximum number of weeks a person can receive benefits from 39 to 50 weeks; extends support of \$300 per week for those who have not exhausted their benefits.
- **Housing:** Extends the eviction freeze through January 31, 2021.
- **Food Security:** Increases monthly SNAP benefits by 15%; extends SNAP eligibility to college students with

- Provides \$400 million for processing milk into dairy products to be donated to food banks and not-for-profit community feeding programs.

Financial Health and Unemployment

- Provides a new round of direct payments of \$600 per person for those making less than \$75,000 (or \$150,000 for married couples) per year. Families with children under 18 years of age that are living at home will receive \$600 per child.
 - Married taxpayers of mixed-immigration status are now eligible for this payment provided they filed jointly.
 - These payments are protected from garnishment by private creditors or debt collectors.
- Creates a framework to eliminate most forms of surprise billing for care provided by out-of-network doctors at in-network hospitals.
- Extends CARES Act unemployment provisions and increases the maximum number of weeks individuals can receive benefits from 39 total weeks to 50.
- Allows individuals receiving benefits as of March 14, 2021 to continue through April 5, 2021.
- Extends unemployment support of \$300 per week for those who have not yet exhausted their state unemployment benefits.
- Requires new applicants for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance to submit documentation substantiating employment or self-employment within 21 days, effective January 31, 2021.

Transportation

- Gives nearly \$285 million to cover route payments to Amtrak that would otherwise come from commuter rail providers (e.g. the SunRail in Central Florida) for costs associated with sharing rail lines with Amtrak.

Housing

- Appropriates \$400 million for states and territories to provide additional emergency rental assistance. Eligible households are those that:
 - Have a household income of not more than 80% of the area median income;
 - Have one or more household members with a “demonstrated risk” of experiencing homelessness or housing instability;
 - Have one or more household members who qualify for unemployment benefits or experienced financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the pandemic.
- Extends the moratorium on evictions through January 31, 2021.

Mental Health

- Gives additional funding for mental health (added onto the FY 2021 appropriated amounts):
 - \$1.65 billion for the Substance Abuse and Prevention Treatment Block Grant.
 - \$1.65 billion for the Mental Health Services Block Grant.
 - \$600 million for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics.
 - \$240 million for emergency grants to States.

Small Businesses

- Extends the existing financial commitment by the federal government to cover 50% of unemployment benefits costs for employees of non-profit organizations.
- Expands the allowable uses for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funds.
 - This now includes expenses related to the acquisition of Personal Protective Equipment.
- Allocates additional funds for “underserved borrowers;” these borrowers will receive an additional five months of principal and interest payments (capped at \$9,000 per month).
- Temporarily allows for the full deduction of business meals provided by a restaurant paid or incurred before January 1, 2023.

Community Partners

- **Housing:** Allows housing cooperatives to utilize the PPP, provided that they employ no more than 300 employees.
- **Education:** Creates an Office of Minority Broadband to focus on increasing broadband internet adoption at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and tribal colleges and universities; extends new grants to these institutions to support connectivity.