



U.S. SENATOR  
**GARY PETERS**

## **HOW THE COVID RELIEF & YEAR-END FUNDING BILL HELPS GOVERNMENTS, NON-PROFITS, AND HEALTH/HUMAN SERVICES**

**Testing and Vaccine distribution:** The bill contains essential funding for vaccine procurement and distribution, therapeutics, and testing, including:

- Roughly \$20 billion to Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) for manufacturing, production and purchase of vaccines, therapeutics, and ancillary supplies.
- Nearly \$9 billion to the Centers for Disease Control and states for vaccine distribution and more than \$3 billion for the strategic national stockpile, including \$300 million specifically directed to high-risk and underserved populations for vaccine distribution, including communities of color.
- More than \$22 billion, all sent directly to states, for testing, contact tracing and COVID mitigation programs. Of this total, \$2.5 billion will be sent out specifically targeted at needs in high-risk and underserved populations, including both communities of color and rural communities.

**Vaccine education:** The end-of-year funding bill includes provisions based on a bill Senator Peters introduced, the VACCINES Act, to increase awareness of the safety and effectiveness of vaccines and to combat misinformation. It authorizes grants for the purpose of planning, implementation, and evaluation of activities to address vaccine-preventable diseases, and for research on improving awareness of scientific and evidence-based vaccine-related information.

### **Health providers and mental health:**

- The COVID relief bill includes \$3 billion in additional emergency Provider Relief Funds for hospitals and a range of health care providers, as well as \$4.5 billion in emergency funding to support mental health and substance use disorder programs.
  - In addition, the bill increases Medicare payment rates to physicians in 2021 and delays cuts to Medicare reimbursement scheduled to start on January 1.

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- In addition, annual funding for opioids and substance use disorder programs will be funded at \$3.95 billion in FY21, a \$84.6 million increase, including:
  - \$1.5 billion to states to address the opioid epidemic;
  - \$91 million for medication assisted treatment;
  - \$476 million for opioid overdose surveillance and prevention at CDC;
  - \$80 million to address the needs of children affected by the opioid crisis; and
  - \$100 million to help affected rural communities.

**Health research:** The NIH will receive \$42.9 billion, a \$1.25 billion increase compared to FY20. In addition, the COVID relief bill includes \$1 billion to the NIH for COVID-related research.

### ● **Schools:**

- The COVID relief bill provides \$82 billion in critical support for schools similar to the funding streams provided through the CARES Act, including:
  - \$54 billion for public K-12 schools;
  - \$20 billion for higher education, including \$20 billion distributed to all public and private non-profit institutions of higher education; and
  - \$4.05 billion for a Governors Emergency Education Relief fund
- Grants to states for special education programs will be funded at \$13.8 billion in FY21, a \$181 million increase.
- Title I grants to support students at high-poverty schools will be increased by \$227 million to \$16.5 billion in FY21.
- Grants to states for career and technical education will be increased by \$52 million in FY21.

### ● **Child care**

- Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG): The COVID relief bill provides an additional \$10 billion to support child care providers struggling due to the COVID 19 pandemic through CCDBG.

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- States can continue to pay child care providers during periods of closure or reduced enrollment as well as provide assistance to child care providers who have not previously received assistance through CCDBG. The bill also allows states to expand child care assistance to essential workers and to provide child care payment relief to working families.
- In addition, the CCDBG program will receive \$5.9 billion in annual funding, an \$85 million increase, compared to FY20.
- Head Start: The COVID relief bill provides \$250 million in additional funding for Head Start to ensure that Head Start programs can continue to operate and safely provide early childhood education and other vital services to low-income children and families throughout the pandemic. In addition, the Head Start program will receive \$10.75 billion in annual funding, a \$135 increase compared to FY20.

**State and Local Help:** The bill provides some important new targeted funds for state and local government functions that will help alleviate their overall budget burdens. These targeted funds include the emergency resources for schools, \$27 billion for state highways, struggling transit agencies, Amtrak and airports, \$22 billion for the health-related expenses of state, local, tribal and territorial governments. This is not the end of the support needed in our communities and Senator Peters is committed to continue fighting for additional relief and state and local resources.

**Coronavirus Relief Fund Extension:** The bill extends the availability for funds provided to states and localities by the Coronavirus Relief Fund in the CARES Act through Dec. 31, 2021.

**Extension of Charitable Giving Incentives:** The bill includes a one-year extension of the \$300 above-the-line-deduction, which was established in the CARES Act and set to expire at the end of 2020. It also increases the amount that married couples filing jointly can deduct for charitable contributions from \$300 to \$600. Additionally, the bill extends through the end of 2021 the increased limits on deductible charitable contributions for individuals who itemize and corporations.



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**Funding for Telehealth:** Additional \$250 million to enhance the FCC's COVID-19 Telehealth Program authorized under the CARES Act. It also puts in place new transparency obligations for the program surrounding the FCC's review of applications, and directs the Commission to ensure, to the extent feasible, that all states benefit from the program.

### **Funding for Transportation: \$45 billion**

**Aviation:** Nationwide, airports will receive \$2 billion to continue operating and disinfect locations for the safety of passengers. The legislation provides \$15 billion to renew the CARES Act program that continues aviation service to airports that might otherwise not serve communities, incentivizes rehiring of laid off workers, and aims to avoid future layoffs, while preventing airlines from using funds for stock buybacks, executive bonuses or for utilizing funds for anything other than supporting workers.

**Transit:** Provides \$14 billion to provide operational aid to transit agencies to enable essential workers, seniors, low income and communities of color to access service to get to and from work, the grocery store, and continue to access health care  
**Infrastructure:** Includes funding to support road, bridge, walking, and alternative transportation investments for infrastructure critical projects that connect residents and put employees back to work.

**Buses and U.S. Vessels:** Provides \$2 billion to ensure inter-city train, bus, school buses, and U.S.-flagged small passenger vessels such as those operating on the Great Lakes have access to capital to continue providing service during the pandemic.