

Coronavirus - congressional action

Information on Congress' response to the coronavirus crisis, including bill summaries, proposed changes to voting procedure, and age breakdown of the 116th Congress

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Producer

Presentation Center

Congress's three-phase response to the coronavirus crisis

Phase 1

Initial support and vaccine development

H.R. 6074 — Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act

- \$8.3 billion in COVID-19 response funding for developing a vaccine and preventing further spread of the virus
- Became law on 3/6/20

Phase 2

Paid leave, unemployment and food assistance

H.R. 6201 — Families First Coronavirus Response Act

- \$100 billion in worker assistance, including emergency paid sick leave, food assistance, and unemployment payments
- Became law on 3/18/20

Phase 3

Major economic stimulus package

H.R. 748 Stimulus package

- Major stimulus package (\$2 trillion)
- Loans and support to major industries, including airlines and small businesses
- Direct payments to individuals and families
- Senate passed on 3/25/20

Phase 1 (H.R. 6074): Coronavirus Preparedness & Response Supplemental Appropriations Act

Introduced
3/4/20

Passed House
3/4/20

Passed Senate
3/5/20

To president
3/5/20

Signed into law
3/6/20



Rep. Nita Lowey
(D-NY-17)
Bill sponsor

Votes in Congress

- **House:** Passed with a vote of 415-2
- **Senate:** Passed with a vote of 96-1

Bill overview

- Provides \$8.3 billion in emergency funding in response to the coronavirus outbreak for:
 - The development and manufacturing of vaccines and other supplies
 - State, local and tribal public health agencies
 - Loans for affected small businesses
 - Evacuations and emergency preparedness activities
 - Humanitarian assistance for affected countries
- The supplemental appropriations will be provided to the FDA, CDC, NIH, Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund, Small Business Administration, Department of State, and USAID
- Designates the supplemental appropriations as emergency spending, which is exempt from discretionary spending limits

Phase 2 (H.R. 6201): Families First Coronavirus Response Act

Introduced
3/11/20

Passed House
3/14/20

Passed Senate
3/18/20

To president
3/18/20

Signed into law
3/18/20



Rep. Nita Lowey
(D-NY-17)
Bill sponsor

Co-sponsors: 6

GOP	0
Dem	6

Votes in Congress

- **House:** Passed with a vote of 363-40
- **Senate:** Passed with a vote of 90-8

Bill overview

- Creates a **federal emergency paid leave program** administered by SSA
- Provides funds for nutrition assistance, including \$500 million for WIC and \$400 million for TEFAP
- Includes \$5 million for the Department of Labor to administer an emergency paid sick days program and \$250 for the Senior Nutrition Program in the Administration for Community Living
- Offers provisions to ensure children's access to school lunches
- Suspends SNAP work requirements
- Requires OSHA to issue an ETS requiring employers in the health care sector to develop a comprehensive exposure control plan to protect workers from COVID-19
- Offers states \$1 billion for emergency grants and interest-free loans to support processing and paying unemployment insurance
- Requires private insurers to expand coverage of certain COVID-19 related expenses

Phase 3 (H.R. 748): Middle Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act (Vehicle for third coronavirus package)

Introduced
3/23/20

Passed Senate
3/25/20

Passed House
N/A

To president
N/A

Signed into law
N/A

Total cost: \$2 trillion

- **Direct payments to individuals:**

- \$1,200 per adult, with an additional \$500 per child
- The full amount will go to individuals who earn >\$75,000/year or \$150,000 for married couples; the payments scale down for higher-earning individuals, phasing out completely at \$99,000 for individuals, \$146,500 for heads of households with one child, and \$198,000 for joint filers without children

- **Hospital investments**

- \$100 billion for hospitals
- \$1 billion to Indian Health Service
- \$16 billion for building a stockpile of medical equipment
- Increases reimbursements by 20% for treating Medicare patients with coronavirus

- **\$500 billion lending funds for industries, states, and localities**

- Loans for companies with more than 500 employees
- \$25 billion in loans to airlines; \$4 billion to cargo carriers
- Bans loans to businesses owned by the president, vice president, heads of executive departments, or members of Congress

- **\$350 billion in loans for small businesses**

- Loans to small businesses would be forgiven if payrolls are maintained
- **Unemployment benefits increased \$600/week for four months**
- **New Treasury IG and Congressional Oversight Board**
- **State and Local Funds**
 - \$150 billion for state and local funds, including \$8 billion for tribal governments

Responding to the coronavirus crisis will limit negotiating time for other legislative priorities

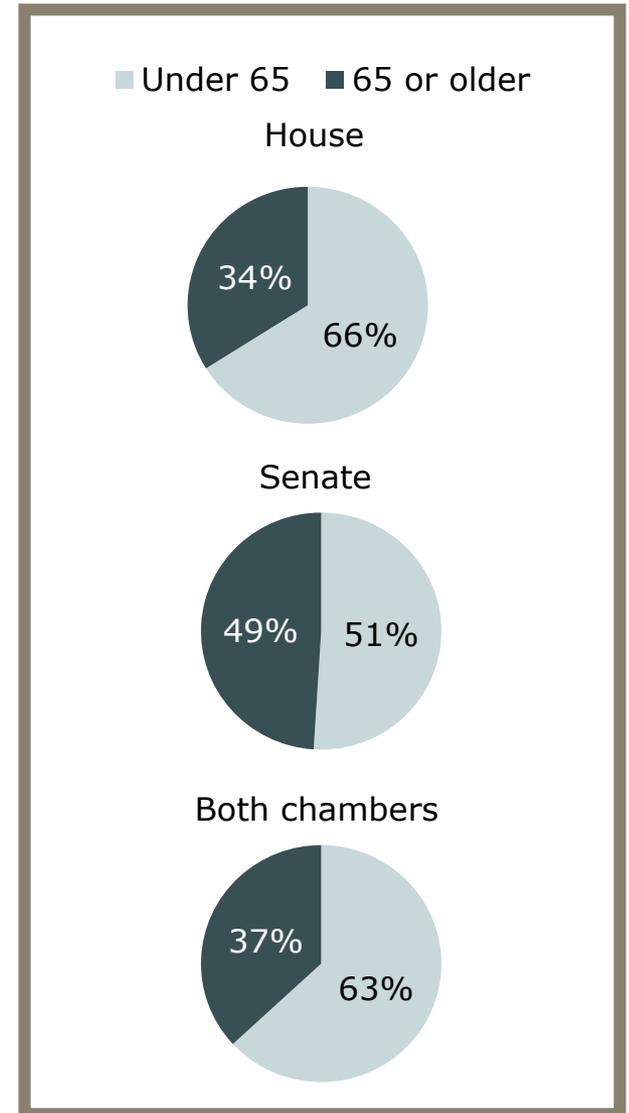
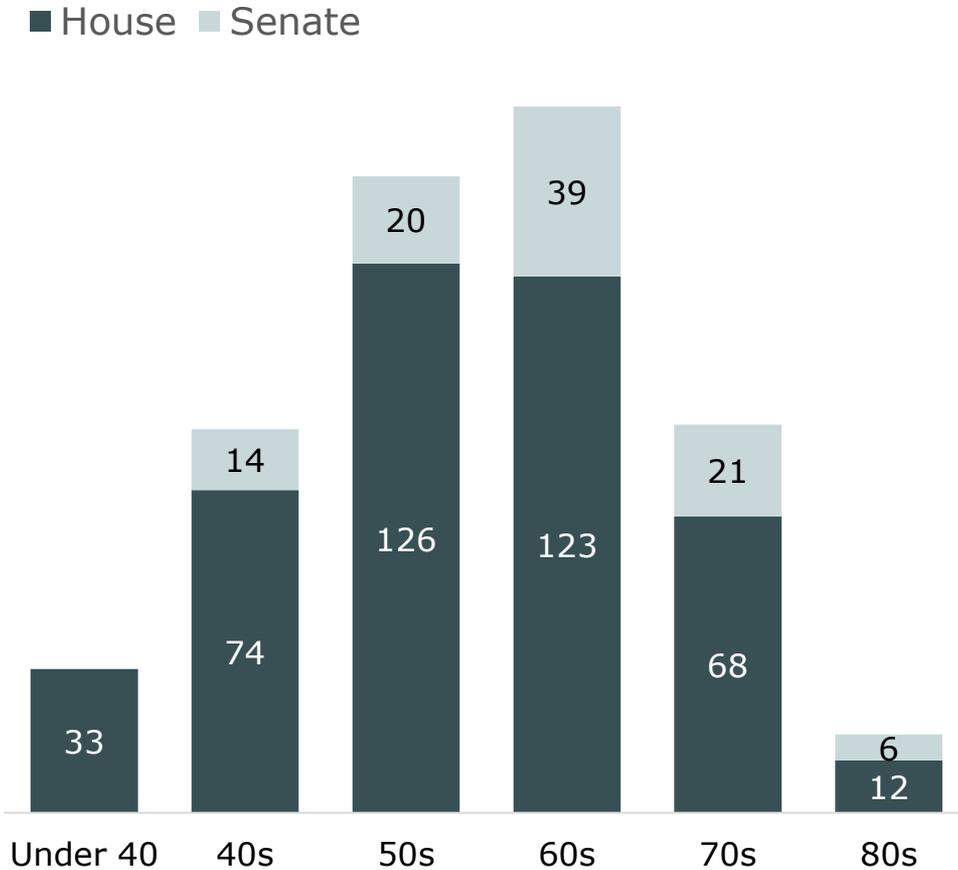
Upcoming legislative deadlines

Topic	Expiration date	Description
FISA Reauthorization	March 15, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four FISA provisions—the “roving wiretap” provision, “lone wolf” provision, “business records” provision, and “call detail records” program—were temporarily extended in the 2019 Continuing Resolution
TANF & CCES Reauthorization	May 22, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs and the Child Care Entitlement to States (CCES) provide child care assistance for low-income families
Health Extenders	May 22, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various Medicare and Medicaid policies are set to expire, including the community mental health services demonstration program
Appropriations	Sept. 30, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The House and Senate began hearings from Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations, although work on coronavirus could delay some negotiations

- The Senate passed a 77 day extension of 3 out of 4 provisions (excluded call detail records)
- The new deadline would be May 30th
- S.3501 passed the Senate on March 16th and would be retroactive to March 14th

Sources: Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget; Politico

Age breakdown of the 116th Congress



*Includes the non-voting representative from D.C.

Sources: National Journal Almanac

Congress is contemplating new voting procedures during the COVID-19 outbreak



Current procedures

Unanimous consent

- All members agree to a motion without voting
- One member can block the motion

Roll call voting

- Each member must enter the chamber and verbally or physically announce their vote
- All Senate votes take place this way

Vote by electronic device - only in House

- Members insert a card into devices located throughout the chamber and then press a button to vote



Changes proposed

Vote by proxy

- A member of Congress allows another member to vote for them in their absence
- Currently allowed in Senate committee votes

Remote voting

- Voting online or by phone from any location

Extended voting periods

- Elongating the time allowed for voting to reduce crowding in the chambers

Raising unanimous consent threshold

- Requiring more than one member to object for a UC motion to be blocked