



# PROBLEM SOLVERS CAUCUS

## REOPENING AND RECOVERY “BACK TO WORK” CHECKLIST

### ADDRESSING THE TWO FRONTS: PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE ECONOMY

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The House and Senate joined to pass the largest, bipartisan emergency relief package in American history. The CARES Act focused on rescue and relief – helping to protect our families and health care workers from COVID-19, to keep Americans on the payroll, and help our businesses survive the immediate devastating fiscal upheaval of turning off the lights of America’s economy. Now, even as we continue to focus on the health crisis, we need a clear back-to-work plan, with clear benchmarks addressing the multi-faceted approach we need to reopen America, safely and with the best chance of reigniting the economy immediately. We must continue to work together, stay focused on the problem, and put country ahead of ideological opportunism.

Below are the benchmarks we must meet to reopen America. This will require a regional, industry-by-industry, incremental, multi-faceted, and data-driven approach. This isn’t a one-size-fits-all vision, but rather a dynamic multi-prong, multi-front strategy combining health, economic rescue, and stimulus plans for our nation’s immediate future.

This is a bipartisan forged – and agreed upon – vision for America’s future in these trying times. This strategic plan has achieved the necessary seventy-five percent consensus and endorsement of the fifty Member Problem Solvers Caucus, evenly split between Democrats and Republicans.



# PUBLIC HEALTH CHECKLIST

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*We need to accept the fact that even when we reopen America, COVID-19 will be a part of our society until we discover and disseminate a vaccine. The key is to mitigate its impact and be prepared to handle new cases. The following public health benchmarks must be achieved to ensure we can reopen America safely.*

**Operational Protocols:**

- Establish and implement public health approved best practice protocols to follow and best extinguish any viral hotspots identified post-opening of America.
- If unable to extinguish such viral hotspots, have available public health approved-and-established operational protocols to contain such viral hotspots.
- If unable to contain such viral hotspots, have established, fully agreed upon operational and actionable mitigation measures to arrest the transmission of the virus from traveling widespread beyond the viral hotspot area.
- We don't need to treat every community and sector the same; we can consider regional and industry-specific openings. But these are the minimum considerations before any openings.

**Rapid and Ubiquitous Testing:** We must have a robust, rapid testing system in place, including both proven serological testing for those who have developed antibodies and sound diagnostic testing to monitor the virus in our communities.

- Mass testing with rapid results: This will require the FDA to continue to approve testing methods like the agency currently has been, and for life science companies to continue to ramp up all forms of rapid testing.
- Contact Tracing Database: Establish a federal database, that's EEOC, HIPAA, and CDC compliant, to track and distribute test results, similar to how we track measles and other vaccinations under existing legislative structures.

**Personal Protective Equipment:** We will need adequate supply chain resources and logistic delivery capability for personal protective equipment (N95 masks, goggles, gloves, etc.) for all first responders, front-line health care workers, and employees in essential sectors to rapidly meet the base and surge healthcare capacity needs outlined in the above operational protocols.

- Schools: We should have access to protective masks for all K-12 school children and teachers to return to school.

## PROBLEM SOLVERS CAUCUS

### Reopening and Recovery "Back to Work" Checklist

- ❑ **Real-Time Health System Capacity:** We must have accessible real-time reporting mechanisms that compile and distribute data on state and local hospital capacity, including both base and surge capacity, to ensure healthcare demands in case of another outbreak or increased caseloads become present. Real time data must include what is the projected need for PPE, ventilators, respirators, as well as health care workers to staff these facilities to meet the base and surge demands of the health care system.
- ❑ **Front-line Health Care Workers:** We must ensure that we have the regional and national staffing levels of doctors, nurses, and technicians to handle another outbreak. We should immediately begin planning for ways to augment our longer-term, front-line health care capacity to handle future pandemics.
- ❑ **Secondary Health Care System Demands and Protocols:** Outpatient facilities, tertiary care networks, long-term care, nursing and veterans homes, inpatient hospice facilities and similar health services need established rapid testing, operational protocols, PPE, and health capacity monitoring plans to ensure patients, residents, staff and the public at large are protected going forward.
- ❑ **Workplace:** All workplaces opened for business will need to configure layouts and workspaces to maintain required social distancing along with appropriate PPE resources, cleaning, and sanitization to ensure a safe workplace is maintained. Employers will need to follow strict cleaning and regular sanitization guidelines. Certain industries with large group gatherings or tight settings such as restaurants, airlines, theaters, and public transit will have to follow stricter standards to operate.
- ❑ **Best Practice Continuous Improvement Plans:** As regions successfully address the virus post-opening of America, we need documented and sharable best practices from those areas to be compiled by the CDC, shared, distributed and replicated across the country to ensure the best Viral Response State of America is maintained.
- ❑ **Logistical Supply Chain Disruption Support Plans:** There will be supply chain disruptions. We need to identify redundancies and how to deliver materials to hot zones and redeploy such resources, e.g. ventilators and PPE, to other regions of the country in a disrupted emergency environment.
- ❑ **Travel Restrictions:** Outline and adopt medically-based and evidence-driven benchmarks that, when triggered, immediately require DHS and other necessary agencies to stop travel to and from infected countries to help mitigate known viral risk vectors from entering the U.S. population.

## PROBLEM SOLVERS CAUCUS

### Reopening and Recovery "Back to Work" Checklist

- Strategic Stockpile:** The CARES Act funded the national stockpile. We will need to meet certain levels of PPE, ventilators, and pharmaceuticals before we can reopen. We also need congressional oversight ensuring the stockpile always has the necessary items and is at the correct capacity.
  
- Prioritize the Development of Therapeutics and a Vaccine – and Immediately Begin Syringe Production:** With a vaccine still many months away, we can start stockpiling materials, including syringes and other materials, to effectively deploy the vaccine once it is operational. In the meantime, we should also focus on developing therapeutic treatments.
  
- Cleaning and Sanitizing:** We will need established capability to massively ramp up cleaning of public spaces, offices, transit, hotels, factories, and other spaces.
  
- Day-to-Day Health Guidance:** The CDC will need to deliver specific and strict guidance on what Americans need to follow when outside their home and in different settings.
  
- Health System Funding Support:** The initial COVID-19 public health emergency has put an enormous financial strain on our hospitals and front-line health workers. We must ensure that our hospitals and workers have the resources, contingencies, and immediate support to mitigate this financial strain and be prepared to handle a future outbreak. In particular, there should be financial consideration for areas of the country acutely impacted by COVID-19 to date.



## ECONOMIC RECOVERY CHECKLIST

- Establishing Resilient Supply Chains:** Identify products manufactured in hot zones and how we can re-source the supply when necessary. We need a clear plan before we can reopen to meet these operational barriers to ensure viability for our nation's businesses.
  - This includes identifying critical areas where we need to bring our supply chains from oversea settings and deploy such manufacturing capacity domestically in the United States. Particular focus should be placed on critical minerals, certain pharmaceuticals needed by Americans, medical equipment such as ventilators, and general personal protective equipment. We must remember having a diversified and resilient supply chain is imperative.
  - Identify and approve incentives to bring these supply chains back to the United States.

## PROBLEM SOLVERS CAUCUS

### Reopening and Recovery "Back to Work" Checklist

- Establish a G20 working group to coordinate during a pandemic or geopolitical outbreak that would mitigate the risk of hoarding of necessary supplies.
- Now, more than ever, we need strong trade relationships, focusing on strengthening our current trade relations, and opening new global opportunities under the post COVID-19 emergency state of affairs.
- Financing for Business to Reopen:** Expand low interest loans and tax incentives to restart ailing businesses, and help fund working capital to purchase necessary supplies, materials, and to hire necessary workforce.
  - Lenders must have access to the necessary liquidity to achieve this effort and have appropriate risk mitigating assurances regarding repayment to ensure such capital flow is achieved.
- Regulatory Fixes:** Review and eliminate unnecessary and outdated regulations that prevent life-saving health outcomes and achieve other necessary relief to reignite the economy. Such efforts should be guided by the success achieved during the outbreak in delivering testing and treatments to help mitigate the loss of life.
- Direct Investments into States, Counties, Cities, Towns, and Tribal Governments:** Additional resources should go to states and directly to all counties, municipalities, and tribal governments that were previously excluded because of pre-existing funding formulas and qualifying population counts.
- Workforce Development to Address Unemployment:** We will need retraining and job placement programs that can be administered through local community colleges, workforce development boards, and career and technical education programs to best align our workers with employment opportunities.
- Rental, Commercial, and Home Ownership Market Stabilization Plan:** The virus and necessary government response have led to significant liquidity and financial exposure up and down the line, from renters and homeowners to landlords and lenders. We must find a way to afford relief, either through long-term loans, rental relief, forgiveness, or temporary forbearance for renters and homeowners, while, at the same time, ensuring the liquidity of related lenders and landlords.
- Agriculture Relief:** The United States farm economy has been significantly impacted by supply disruption, workforce dislocation, and dilution of demand resulting from necessary closure and quarantine orders. Robust agriculture recovery initiatives must be enacted including direct aid, recovery assistance, and where appropriate, lending opportunities, to ensure that this essential sector recovers.



## LONGER-TERM ECONOMIC STIMULUS PLAN

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### **Infrastructure Investment**

- We must make a substantial investment in our nation's infrastructure – from air, rail, roads, tunnels and bridges to water and broadband. With zero percent interest rates and jobless claims continuing to rise, there is no better time than now to pass a comprehensive bipartisan infrastructure investment.
- As our economy reopens, we need to make it as easy as possible for our business to compete, a historic investment in our nation's infrastructure will do just that.
- Such infrastructure package must not only address our known existing infrastructure shortcomings such as those identified in our previously endorsed [Problem Solvers Caucus Infrastructure Plan](#), but also make strategic long-term thinking investments to best position the United States over the next half century.

- New and Continued Stimulus Action:** For the time being, we must support continued aggressive stimulus programs implemented and adopted by recent legislative, regulatory and central bank actions. Additional similar actions should be considered. This is essential to providing the necessary rescue, relief, and, ultimately, stimulative structures across our economy, to ensure every individual, worker, business, and government entity threatened by COVID-19 fully recovers. Such policy is also critical to reviving the nation's underlying economy for the long term.

