

**FROM RESCUE TO RECOVERY: BUILDING  
A THRIVING AND INCLUSIVE POST-  
PANDEMIC ECONOMY**

---

---

**HEARING**

BEFORE THE  
SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CORONAVIRUS  
CRISIS  
OF THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND  
REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MARCH 17, 2021

**Serial No. 117-9**

Printed for the use of the Committee on Oversight and Reform



Available on: *www.govinfo.gov*,  
*oversight.house.gov* or  
*docs.house.gov*

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

43-985 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2021

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

CAROLYN B. MALONEY, New York, *Chairwoman*

ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, District of Columbia	JAMES COMER, Kentucky, <i>Ranking Minority Member</i>
STEPHEN F. LYNCH, Massachusetts	JIM JORDAN, Ohio
JIM COOPER, Tennessee	PAUL A. GOSAR, Arizona
GERALD E. CONNOLLY, Virginia	VIRGINIA FOXX, North Carolina
RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY, Illinois	JODY B. HICE, Georgia
JAMIE RASKIN, Maryland	GLENN GROTHMAN, Wisconsin
RO KHANNA, California	MICHAEL CLOUD, Texas
KWEISI MFUME, Maryland	BOB GIBBS, Ohio
ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ, New York	CLAY HIGGINS, Louisiana
RASHIDA TLAIB, Michigan	RALPH NORMAN, South Carolina
KATIE PORTER, California	PETE SESSIONS, Texas
CORI BUSH, Missouri	FRED KELLER, Pennsylvania
DANNY K. DAVIS, Illinois	ANDY BIGGS, Arizona
DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Florida	ANDREW CLYDE, Georgia
PETER WELCH, Vermont	NANCY MACE, South Carolina
HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., Georgia	SCOTT FRANKLIN, Florida
JOHN P. SARBANES, Maryland	JAKE LATURNER, Kansas
JACKIE SPEIER, California	PAT FALLON, Texas
ROBIN L. KELLY, Illinois	YVETTE HERRELL, New Mexico
BRENDA L. LAWRENCE, Michigan	BYRON DONALDS, Florida
MARK DESAULNIER, California	
JIMMY GOMEZ, California	
AYANNA PRESSLEY, Massachusetts	
VACANCY	

DAVID RAPALLO, *Staff Director*  
DAVID HICKTON, *Select Committee Staff Director*  
RUSSELL ANELLO, *Chief Counsel*  
SENAM OKPATAH, *Clerk*  
CONTACT NUMBER: 202-225-5051  
MARK MARIN, *Minority Staff Director*

SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

JAMES E. CLYBURN, South Carolina, <i>Chairman</i>	
MAXINE WATERS, California	STEVE SCALISE, Louisiana, <i>Ranking Minority Member</i>
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, New York	JIM JORDAN, Ohio
NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ, New York	MARK E. GREEN, Tennessee
BILL FOSTER, Illinois	NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS, New York
JAMIE RASKIN, Maryland	MARIANNETTE MILLER-MEEKS, Iowa
RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY, Illinois	

# C O N T E N T S

---

Hearing held on March 17, 2021 .....	Page 1
WITNESSES	
Joseph E. Stiglitz, University Professor, Columbia University, Nobel Laureate in Economics Oral Statement .....	7
William E. Spriggs, Chief Economist, AFL-CIO, Professor, Department of Economics, Howard University Oral Statement .....	9
Larry Kudlow, Former National Economic Council Director (2018-2021) Oral Statement .....	11

*Written opening statements and the written statements of the witnesses are available on the U.S. House of Representatives Document Repository at: docs.house.gov.*

## INDEX OF DOCUMENTS

---

\* Letter Regarding School Funding; submitted by Rep. Raskin.  
*Documents entered into the record during this hearing and Questions for the Record (QFR's) are available at: docs.house.gov.*



# FROM RESCUE TO RECOVERY: BUILDING A THRIVING AND INCLUSIVE POST- PANDEMIC ECONOMY

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM  
*Washington, D.C.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:15 a.m., via WebEx, Hon. James E. Clyburn (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Clyburn, Waters, Maloney, Foster, Raskin, Krishnamoorthi, Scalise, Jordan, Green, and Malliotakis.

Chairman CLYBURN. Good morning. The committee will come to order.

Without objection, the House—the chair is authorized to declare a recess of the committee at any time.

I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

Americans have testified—have suffered terribly during the Coronavirus pandemic. The virus has killed more than half a million of our fellow Americans and resulted in the loss of more than 22 million jobs, many of which have yet to come back.

These losses of lives and livelihoods have not affected all Americans equally. Historic job losses have disproportionately impacted populations that were also hit hardest by the virus, including low-wage workers, Black Americans, and Latinxes. Women have suffered greater economic harm than men.

Last summer, former chair—Fed Chair Ben Bernanke and current Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen testified before this committee that low-paid workers, women, and minorities are overly represented in the sectors hit hardest by the economic crisis, like restaurants and hotels. They explained that these groups—and I'm quoting their joint statement here—have borne a disproportionate share of the job and income losses, end of quote.

President Trump's own Treasury Secretary agreed. He testified before this committee last year that many industries and small businesses were, in his word, "destroyed" by the pandemic. And the service industries employing low-wage workers—and I'm quoting again—have been particularly hard hit.

Of course, many jobs have returned; 379,000 jobs were created in February. And the official unemployment rate has dropped to 6.2 percent from a high of 14.8 percent in the early months of the pan-

demic. This is encouraging news. But our economy has still not replaced roughly 10 million jobs that existed last year.

And Fed Chair Jerome Powell has cautioned that the official unemployment rate fails to get to account the millions of Americans who have left the work force due to Coronavirus health or family reasons or because they work in industries that haven't come back yet.

Even the official numbers show stark disparities. While the overall unemployment rate in February was 6.2 percent, the rate for White Americans stood at 5.6 percent, while the rate was 8.5 percent for Latinxes, and nearly 10 percent for Black Americans.

These job losses can have devastating long-term consequences for people's future employment prospects and their ability to stay in their home, care for their families, and avoid a spiral of unsustainable debt. Even as the stock market hits record highs, 42 million Americans, including 1 in 6 children, do not have enough to eat.

The American Rescue Plan will lift these communities with urgently needed support. The nonpartisan Urban Institute projects that this groundbreaking law will reduce poverty in America by one-third and by more than half for children and for families facing job loss. Racial economic disparities will be reduced, and the overall economy will be given a boost.

The Select Subcommittee is committed to working with the Biden-Harris administration to ensure the American Rescue Plan is implemented effectively, efficiently, and equitably, so that it can, to its full benefit, can be realized.

But rescue is only the first step toward recovery. Many economies are now sounding the alarm that if we fail to build on the American Rescue Plan, we could see a fundamental inequitable post-pandemic economy where the wealthy reconsolidate their pre-pandemic prosperity, while low-income families continue to suffer. We must be vigilant to ensure this reversion to economic inequity is avoided.

That is why this morning, I sent a letter to the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Labor asking that they include data on employment disparities in the upcoming budget and put those metrics at the forefront of our efforts to reduce economic inequities.

To succeed in building a strong and inclusive post-pandemic economy, we must, first and foremost, invest in our Nation's infrastructure, as many economists are urging. We must put Americans to work at good wages, repairing our country's crumbling roads and bridges, enhancing rail and transit, expanding a fuller access to broadband internet, upgrading water systems, building houses and schools, constructing state-of-the-art healthcare facilities, and transitioning to clean energy.

As we make these investments, we must create opportunities for small businesses and ensure equity in Federal procurement and lending. Taking these steps now will pay dividends for generations to come.

Just like the American Rescue Plan, bold infrastructure investment has broad support across the country from Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. Every member of this committee rep-

resent Americans in need of economic opportunity and communities in need of economic development.

According to the Census Bureau, there are approximately 500 counties in the United States that are classified as persistent poverty counties. These are counties where 20 percent or more of their citizens have lived below the poverty level for the last 30 years.

I have long advocated that resources be targeted into these communities. This is not a partisan issue. Two-thirds of the people in these communities are represented in this body by Republicans. I invite my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to work with my colleagues on my side of the aisle on an ambitious plan to get all Americans back to work building a strong equitable and sustainable economy.

I now yield to the ranking member for his opening statement.

Mr. SCALISE. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank our witnesses as well as the new members who have joined our committee in this new Congress. I look forward to all of your participation.

The subcommittee has not held a hearing since October 2 of last year, which strikes us as pretty extraordinary. Speaker Pelosi stood up this committee to deal with the pandemic, yet we've gone five months without a single hearing during some of the most impactful months of the pandemic; five months, that is, without having investigations on school reopenings, fundamental health and drug addiction crisis we're seeing; to deal with China and the World Health Organization in the role they played; to look at vaccine rollout; the nursing home death scandal; as well as COVID that's now spreading in some of our communities at America's open southern border.

Instead, the Select Subcommittee went silent during this period. Today, it does reopen but for the sole purpose of serving as Speaker Pelosi's PR machine to tout the Payoff to Progressives boondoggle bill that passed on a strictly partisan vote last week.

When this subcommittee was created, the majority made a point of emphasizing the desire to model it after the Truman committee, which we had during World War II, a committee that strove to make sure the Federal Government spent taxpayer money wisely and effectively. But instead, what we've seen is just attempts to cheer spending nearly \$2 trillion, over 90 percent of which, by the way, had nothing to do with the health needs or reopening schools, and then argue that, we're hearing this week, more taxes need to be raised, more spending, maybe trillions more in spending need to be made. Where does this end?

A year into the pandemic, shouldn't the Select Subcommittee be focusing on lessons learned? There are many, good and bad, by the way. We do know that inflation adjusted dollars, all of World War II cost \$4 trillion. We've now spent over \$5.5 trillion. And much of that money, by the way, still remains unspent. Look, hundreds of billions of dollars from previous COVID relief bills are still unspent.

If this subcommittee was truly modeled after the Truman committee, this Select Subcommittee should be leading—the leading voice in Congress educating the American people that some Governors managed their states dramatically better than other Governors. And we could be sharing those best practices, which, by the

way, those best practices in the states, these incubators of democracy could be shared to save us trillions of dollars, seeing how some did it well, some did it poorly, surely not replicating what was done in the states that didn't do it well, and trying to amplify the voices of the states who did it well so others can do it.

The minority asked all year to hold hearings on China and the role that the World Health Organization played at being China's mouthpiece in those early days when they instead could have been helping us confront the crisis that no one knew about that was coming out of Wuhan. The majority refused that request.

Now even *The Washington Post* Editorial Board has written, quote, "We're still missing the origin story of this pandemic. China is sitting on the answers," close quote. We should be trying to get those answers. The Post Editorial Board is also asking the same question that we've asked the majority on the subcommittee from the beginning, quote, "What is China trying to hide about the origins of the pandemic and why," close quote. Other voices from both the left and the right have raised the same concerns. But the silence from the majority rings loudly.

Mr. Chairman, China's lies in the World Health Organization's coverup cost us half a million lives, not just here in America, but all around the world; could have saved millions of lives. Where is that bipartisan outrage?

On June 14, the minority wrote the Governors of five states a letter asking for information about deadly nursing home policies that forced COVID-positive patients back into nursing homes against the CMS guidance that was out there. The majority ignored us. If they would have joined us, we could have gotten those answers. History now shows that we were right in asking those questions.

And now it has come out that Governor Cuomo of New York initiated a potentially criminal coverup, specifically designed to hide those facts, not just from us in Congress, but from the people of New York, the families of those thousands of people who never should have died, who are still, by the way, demanding answers. Those families deserve answers. We're going to keep fighting until we get those answers. Whether Governor Cuomo wants to comply or not, the answers are going to come out. And you are seeing people even within his own administration, that don't want to go down with a sinking ship, that are finally starting to speak out.

I would encourage any official in the state of New York who has that information to get it to us. Don't be complicit in Governor Cuomo's coverup. Enough reports are out there that he tried to hide this data. They were on a call with state senators in New York bragging about the fact that they hid the data. Don't be involved in a coverup. Thousands of families in New York want and deserve answers. The rest of the country can learn from those deadly mistakes. I would encourage everyone in New York, from Governor Cuomo on down, to share that information.

Right now, you're seeing Democratic colleagues even calling for Governor Cuomo's resignation, in part citing the nursing home scandal, in addition to his sexual harassment scandals. But the silence from Democrats here in Congress rings volumes. Just last week, we again asked for a hearing on this scandal. I would urge the committee to bring this up.



A year into this pandemic, we know many cities made devastating mistakes on school closures. Back in March and April of last year, maybe the mistakes then would have been understandable, but now we have the data, we have the science, we know what is happening to our young children all across the country. And by the way, the science is loudly saying the kids need to be back in the classroom. It can be done safely. There's a roadmap out there for doing it. The American Academy of Pediatrics has laid that out. We have also seen it from CMS. Even the CMS Director under President Biden acknowledged that kids could be back in school.

We put hundreds of billions of dollars out there for this, by the way, in previous relief packages. Some school systems chose to actually spend this money and get kids back in the classroom. Unfortunately, it's only about 40 percent of America's students who are back in the classroom. The damage that's being done to millions of kids, not because of the science, but because of the unions who don't want to go back to school. In fact, they were just urging teachers they can go to spring break while they're not in the classroom, just don't post pictures of you being on spring break. That tells you what's going on. There is a tremendous disservice. And so many teachers want to be back in the classroom, and yet their unions are fighting to hold them out.

These kids are suffering. We're seeing mental illness off the charts. We're seeing opioid abuse, including deaths and suicide, off the charts, not to mention, Mr. Chairman, the long-term damage that's being done to these kids that are being held back and left behind. None of us should stand for that. We should all be having hearings and calling for hearings on this scandal. And let's fight to get our schools reopen and follow the science.

We hear we can't open schools until this money is spent. Schools need to upgrade. Of course, we already spent hundreds of billions in relief that was targeted to getting schools open. So that money is available for anyone who wanted it. But some schools that chose to serve the children opened, some bowed to the unions.

We need to look at the science and follow it and open our schools. This may be one of the biggest public policy mistakes that America has seen by these systems that are still refusing to open up their schools to in-classroom learning.

The per cap—capita death rate from COVID in California and Florida are about the same. New York is much higher than both. California and New York, of course, locked down, crushed businesses so many that will never reopen. Schools and churches that are closed. Their unemployment rates are nine and 8.8 percent in New York and California. Florida, while facing very misguided criticism, opened up their schools and businesses and followed the science and did it safely. Their unemployment rate is about 4.5 to five percent, less than five percent.

So after five months with no hearings, Mr. Chairman, it seems like today's hearing should be about the different experiences we have seen in states, some that stayed locked down and some states that safely opened, and how to share those best practices. Because if the Select Subcommittee modeled this after Harry Truman in what he did with the Truman Commission, the conclusion would be

that we couldn't have saved trillions of dollars by focusing on the most vulnerable in our society, by redirecting ourselves to ending inequality in our education system, by simply following the science, by analyzing the data that's out there now after a year of shut-downs, and acknowledging that American ingenuity and things like President Trump's Operation Warp Speed are the path to getting out of this pandemic.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses, and I yield back.

Chairman CLYBURN. I thank the ranking member for his statement. And I would like to remind you, my dear friend, that we wanted very much to have those hearings that you talked about, but for some strange reason, the minority leader refused to appoint committee members, which prevented us from having those hearings.

Now, as for the schools, I think you know that in this bill, the Rescue Plan, \$128 million to make our schools safe so people can return. Being a former public schoolteacher myself, I know how important it is. But for some reason, my Republican colleagues refused to support that \$128 million.

Mr. SCALISE. Will the gentlemen yield on that?

Chairman CLYBURN. Yes, I'm pleased to yield.

Mr. SCALISE. Clearly, and we pointed this out during the hearing, we actually tried to correct it when we were seeing this still move through, over 95 percent of that money for schools can't even be spent this year. And not a single dollar was dedicated to safely reopen schools. In fact, we had amendments to require that the money be used to reopen schools, and we were shut out. That amendment was blocked on a partisan basis.

So, I'd look forward to working with the gentleman to target money on the things that need to be addressed. Unfortunately, the bill that passed last week didn't do that. And I'd yield.

Chairman CLYBURN. Well, I thank you for your statement, except that I totally disagree with it. But we've got some other people here to hear from today, so I'm not going to get into a back and forth with you on that. But I thank you for your statement.

And I welcome today, two new members. It looks like both the Speaker and the minority leader have been testing my southern education with these appointees here. But I'm going to welcome on the Democratic side, Mr. Krishnamoorthi. I hope I didn't do too much damage to that. And on the minority side, Ms. Malliotakis.

Mr. SCALISE. You got it. Good job.

Chairman CLYBURN. Very good. Well, my Southernese ain't as bad as I thought. So, I welcome them.

I now am pleased to welcome our distinguished witnesses: Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel Laureate in economics and professor at Columbia University; William E. Spriggs, the chief economist at AFL-CIO, a professor at Howard University; and former director of the National Economic Council, Counselor Larry Kudlow. Thank you all for being here today and for your testimony.

The witnesses will now be unmuted so we can swear them in.

Assuming that you all have been unmuted, please raise your right hands.

Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Let the record show that the witnesses answered in the affirmative.

Thank you.

And without objection, your written statements will be made a part of the record.

With that, Professor Stiglitz, you are now recognized to provide your testimony.

**STATEMENT OF JOSEPH E. STIGLITZ, UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NOBEL LAUREATE IN ECONOMICS**

Mr. STIGLITZ. [Inaudible] I would like to begin by congratulating Congress and the administration on what they have already accomplished.

Before discussing the next steps—and let me emphasize, I think your time is rightly spent thinking about the steps going forward, not thinking back of what should have been done. But before discussing these next steps, let me highlight some of the achievements of this act.

A large child allowance that will cut child poverty in half. This is a huge step forward to giving the government an affirmative role in directly supporting people, especially children, who cannot fend for themselves. And, second, sector-specific relief. The huge increase in spending for higher education, the health industry, and especially aid to states and localities, which will stem the tide of austerity policies and contraction that would otherwise have resulted.

Most importantly, the dramatic difference between this bill and the action taken a year ago is that this bill has a vision of what kind of society and economy we want. With the Federal Government spending so much money, the expenditures should reflect a collective vision. It is a start to building back better.

In this testimony, I focus on one dimension of building back better: creating a more widely shared prosperity. The pandemic has further exposed and aggravated the divides in our society. The irony is the frontline workers who put themselves most often in harm's way, who contribute so much to our society, are among the lowest paid. If we value those who educate our children, nurse our sick, care for our elderly, it is unconscionable that we pay them so little. Their wages are largely determined, not by abstract market forces, but by decisions we make as a society. Some of this low pay is a legacy of discrimination, many aspects of which we have been reminded of during the past 12 months.

Now I am worried that the K-shaped recovery that is underway will further aggravate the high levels of inequality in the United States. It may even speed up changes associated with robotization and AI that are already happening, and they risk widening the gap even more. So, it's imperative that we focus our policy on dealing with the grave inequities in our society.

The tasks before us are many and our resources are limited. Thus, we'll have to make our dollars do double and triple duty—

rescue, revive our economy; promote economic and social justice; push the structural transformation of our economy and retrofit it to face the existential crisis of climate change.

The good news is that research shows that there is an ample supply of investments that can do all of these simultaneously. There are strong complementarities. A green infrastructure program can be timely, have large multipliers, with a big bang for the buck; be labor-intensive; and better connect workers with jobs through public transportation. The effects of adverse environmental conditions are felt most strongly by the poor, and that's another reason that better environmental regulations and more investments to protect the environment are such an important part of an equitable recovery.

I would like to note two aspects of the bill that ought to be addressed in future legislation. First, I would have been happier if some of the key provisions, such as extended unemployment insurance, had been linked to some measure of a weakness in the labor market or the economy. As I've argued in another recent paper with Secretary—former Secretary of Treasury Robert Rubin and former OMB Director Peter Orszag, we should have more automatic stabilizers.

Second, many of the actions need to be made permanent. For instance, those related to reducing child poverty.

There's so much to do for a truly strong resilient, just, and sustainable economy. And let me just list a few of those issues very briefly.

A fair and better designed tax system could close loopholes, enhance economic efficiency, promote growth, and reduce the administrative burden and inequities that plague the current system.

We need to ensure that everyone can receive the education that enables them to reach their full potential, regardless of their parents' income. A GI Bill for all Americans. We can afford it. This is an investment in our country's future. So, in a way, we cannot afford not to do it. But with politics in America being what they are, if we cannot reach this goal, it is time to recognize the historical legacy of discrimination and deprivation against African Americans and Native Americans and at least create a GI Bill for these groups.

We need to deal with the legacy of education debt that has been built up in this country, which imposes an unacceptable burden on too many young Americans.

We need affordable healthcare for all, and the gaps in the ACA need to be quickly remedied. A public option is a reasonable way forward. The pandemic demonstrated the poor health of so many Americans and laid bare the fact that the U.S. has the lowest life expectancy of any major advanced country and the largest health disparities.

And we need to explore public options to make decent housing and a secure retirement more affordable for all.

The rampant and growing inequalities in our society are to a large measure a result of power imbalances in the marketplace. And if we are to ensure that we don't have a K-shaped recovery, these have to be corrected.

Before concluding, I would like to say a word about the macroeconomics underlying what has been done. It would, in fact, be a good thing if we faced greatly tightened labor markets. It is only during those times that we bring marginalized groups into the labor force and reduce the longstanding inequities.

Let me conclude, the American dream has always been about ensuring that everyone has a chance to have a decent middle-class life. It has always been about opportunity for all, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or the income and education of one's parents. We have to recognize that, today, the American dream is largely a myth.

The pandemic has provided us a moment to reflect on where we are and where we should go, to redesign our economy and society to provide that dream once more, this time for all Americans. I hope we seize the opportunity.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much, Professor Stiglitz.

Now we will turn to Professor Spriggs.

Professor Spriggs, you're now recognized.

**STATEMENT OF WILLIAM E. SPRIGGS, CHIEF ECONOMIST, AFL CIO, PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, HOWARD UNIVERSITY**

Mr. SPRIGGS. Thank you, Chairman Clyburn and Ranking Member Scalise, for this invitation to give testimony before your subcommittee today on the issue of rebuilding America's economy in the wake of the novel Coronavirus. I am happy to offer this testimony on behalf of the AFL-CIO, America's house of labor, representing the working people of the United States, and based on my expertise as a professor in Howard University's Department of Economics.

My testimony will focus on some immediate needs to be addressed following the enactment of the American Rescue Plan, but it would also address some of the issues that the current crisis has made clear. The scope and size of the American Rescue Plan clearly show the cumulative cost of our economy of high levels of inequality and our lack of attention to addressing both inequality within the market economy, and our tools to addressing equality through our fiscal policies.

As a Nation, our economy cannot afford workers earning less than \$15 an hour, nor can we afford making our work force subject to casualization, dodging our wage and hour laws through misclassifying workers as independent contractors. We have gone too long with a falling share of national income going to workers, disconnecting national prosperity from wage incomes. It is time we balanced the bargaining power of workers in management and ensure our households can be more resilient to economic downturns.

The huge imbalance in racial wealth is a large contributor to overall inequality, and it is a particular problem because of the low absolute level of liquidity held by Black and Latino households, in particular. We must recommit ourselves to address a legacy of a host of discriminatory policies that leave too many households lacking resilience during economic downturns. Addressing those disparities is very expensive.

As a result of these deficiencies, the size of the American Rescue Plan has given us a larger national debt. To resolve that issue, we must learn from our past. We faced a large threat to our Nation during World War II. This is our biggest test since then. We resolved the debt of that conflict having higher marginal tax rates on high incomes, pursuing full employment policies to keep the economy from falling into needing fiscal stabilization, and by investing our way out of debt through a massive infrastructure package that created our modern interstate highway system.

Further, we made a massive investment in the education of Americans, granting free college to returning World War II vets, and then repeating that by bringing the next wave of young people affordable student loans to pursue degrees in vital strategic areas in engineering, science, math, modern languages, and public education.

We did not respond with austerity. We responded by doubling down our bets on the American people and made a down payment America's future, launching the greatest increase in productivity, wages and technological innovation among developed economies up through 1980.

Our infrastructure weakness is a national security risk. Our clear inability to respond to the water crisis in Jackson, Mississippi, is another embarrassment that shows us to be weak and unable to quickly respond to our major disruptions.

We must fix our unemployment insurance system. This is one of the things that the Rescue Plan sought to correct. We cannot go into the next downturn with this weakened condition. Relying on a state-based system that clearly showed discrimination in who had access to unemployment benefits that forced Congress to have to come up with a patch is not going to be acceptable. Congress must immediately go to resolve the remaining disparities in the system.

In 2018, fewer than eight percent of those who were unemployed in leisure and hospitality received unemployment benefits under the normal system. That's why this patch had to be done, but going forward, we cannot rely on this state-based system.

In rebuilding, we must face that our labor force is not growing fast enough. We must find ways that infrastructure should be the means of getting people to work, and that means increasing female labor force participation. That means an infrastructure that includes expanding childcare, addressing elder care, addressing the disparities in access to elder care that we know will result from the racial wealth gap where this is most acute in retirement. We must have paid family leave so that we can get women's labor force participation up.

We must find a way to revamp and revise the way that we have been conducting higher education in the last 10 years that allowed this and only this generation to be faced with college debt at this exorbitant level. We cannot rely on higher education being a private-funded matter. It has a disproportionate impact on Black families who are more likely to have college debt, and when they are the ones with college debt, have the most college debt.

We have to find a way to provide reliable public transportation. This is the way to provide mobility and resilience to workers, and

that includes workers in rural areas who must have access to adequate transportation.

Going forward, we cannot afford to have inequality at this level. The IMF, the OECD have clearly documented that inequality slows growth. This will be the biggest impediment for a thriving economy going forward. Everything that Congress can do to address inequality at all levels, at issues of race and gender, must be put in place so that we can have a full recovery for everyone.

Thank you.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much, Professor Spriggs.

We will now hear from Mr. Kudlow.

Mr. Kudlow, you are now recognized.

**STATEMENT OF LARRY KUDLOW, FORMER NATIONAL  
ECONOMIC COUNCIL DIRECTOR (2018 2021)**

Mr. KUDLOW. I raised a couple of key [inaudible] looking at maybe the past's prologue to the future. I'm not going to comment on the act that was just—the so-called stimulus act that was just put through. My criticisms have been made elsewhere. There was some good but a lot of not so good.

I do want to say this: I agree with Mr. Clyburn and Mr. Scalise and some of the others that we need a balanced and equitable and inclusive economic recovery. I fully agree with that goal. What I want to note here, though, is that looking at the policies of the last administration, the Trump administration, of lower tax rates, significant rollback of regulations, energy independence, and also tough and fair trade policies, particularly with China, that pre-pandemic, in the first three years before we got hit by this awful catastrophe, we had a broad-based inclusive economic growth rate, a resurgence and renaissance of the economy, which middle and lower-middle income folks did better than upper-income folks by a significant degree. And minority groups, be they African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, women, people with only high school degrees, did significantly better. It was the middle-and lower-income brackets that far outpaced the upper brackets. The tax cuts, lower tax rates, particularly for corporations and smaller businesses, as well as the regulatory rollback and the energy story-book.

After many years of stagnant wages going back to the year 2000, median household incomes rose by \$6,500 for a typical family of four. Real wages increased 10 percent for blue-collar and middle-class workers. I called it a blue-collar boom pre-pandemic. 6.6 million Americans were lifted out of poverty. Household wealth, that's stocks and homes and cash, household wealth for the bottom 20 percent of income earners increased 34 percent, while household wealth of middle-income Americans increased 20 percent. Wages, incomes, and household wealth for the top one percent and the top five percent grew but far less, substantially far less, than what we saw in the lower income groups.

The bottom 50 percent of households saw an astonishing 40 percent raise in net wealth. Poverty rates for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asians, women reached their record low numbers. Inequality declined dramatically. All this was a complete reversal,

not only of the prior eight years, but, frankly, of the prior 16 years going back to the year 2000.

Unemployment hit 50-year lows. Employment participation rates hit almost 50-year highs. And, again, it benefited, you got low unemployment at 3.5 percent overall. But, again, the key minority groups, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, women, less well-educated blue collars and middle-income people, they have rock bottom 50-year low unemployment rates. So, I just put that on the table.

My biggest concern here is that we're going to turn back the clock and reverse these policies. And my thought here is that if we do, if we reverse the Trump tax cuts, if we move into a huge over-regulated economy, if we end fossil fuels and end energy independence, we will do great damage, specifically to those groups that have been discussed this morning, the minority groups and so forth, women, people in poverty, underserved community.

I want to also tout the opportunity zone program. Roughly, 1,000 opportunity zones have been set up across the country to provide incentives for investments to underserved communities. These must be allowed to stay.

I think at the end of the day, the best policies we can do is not to overspend, not to try to penalize success, not to try to raise taxes and regulations in ways that we haven't seen in 30 or 40 years. The best thing we can do is provide an incentive-oriented supply side driven growth model that has worked in the past to deliver the goods and the incomes to the very people that we are talking about, the so-called inclusive recovery.

These policies, I might add, have worked under Democrat and Republican administrations. I wrote a book on this subject. John F. Kennedy was the biggest tax cutter since World War II. He was really the first supply sider. Ronald Reagan followed. Bill Clinton may have raised taxes in his first year, but he wound up cutting the capital gains tax and the biggest welfare reforms, a bipartisan ship with Newt Gingrich, that this country has ever seen.

And I want to make a note on welfare reforms. I guess it will be my final point. I don't want to go on forever. But this recent stimulus bill has expanded the welfare state, probably by the largest amount since the LBJ Great Society. And, in particular, I want to express my worry and my concern that this expansion which has left work requirements out, whether it's the child credit or anything else, work requirements have been decimated in this bill, and people want to make that permanent. That goes against what Clinton and Gingrich did. And I fear that it will create more poverty and more unemployment as we go forward.

So, I would like to see less spending. I would like to see more supply side economics. I say this in a bipartisan sense, we can work together to achieve these goals. At the end of the day, gentlemen, I think the private enterprise economy is going to deliver the goods for all Americans far better than a top-down, heavy government, central planning economy.

Thank you for listening.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much, Mr. Kudlow.

Each member now will have five minutes for questions.

I now recognize myself for five minutes.



Now, I am very concerned that these sectors of the economy that have been hit the hardest during this pandemic are those intended to employ workers who are already economically vulnerable, exacerbating economic inequity. Last year, Federal Reserve Chairman Powell testified before our subcommittee, and I am quoting him here: The burden of the downturn has not fallen equally on all Americans. Those least able to withstand the downturn have been affected most. The rise in joblessness has been especially severe for lower wage workers, for women, and for African Americans and Hispanics, end of quote.

Professor Spriggs, you testified that the unemployment rate for workers of color in the most affected industries last year was more than 38 percent, and the labor market still has not recovered all those jobs. What is the long-term impact on economically distressed communities if those inequities are not addressed.

Mr. SPRIGGS. Thank you, Chairman Clyburn, for that question. It is clear from the downturn that we are currently at the same place in terms of the gap in payroll employment as we were at the depth of the Great Recession. We still have a long way to go.

The loss of wealth from this large period of unemployment is a large contributor to the racial wealth gap. Downturns affect Black and Latino communities more severely. Blacks have the largest period of long-term unemployment. This is not a matter of skills. The unemployment rate for high school dropouts in the United States, during most of this period since February, for high school dropouts has been lower than the Black unemployment rate.

Last month, when the Black unemployment rate went up as others went down, the unemployment rate for Black men, all Black men was lower—was higher, was higher than the unemployment rate for high school dropouts. This is not a matter of skills. It's a matter of the way discrimination takes place within the recovery.

Back in April when the economy was shot, the Black unemployment rate collapsed. Since then, we have seen the way the labor market performs, and the 2 to 1 ratio is on its way back. That loss of income, of job experience has ramifications going forward. It penalizes the youngest workers the most. They will have permanent income loss from this.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much for your answer there.

Professor Stiglitz, you know, if Congress had not enacted the American Rescue Plan, could we have counted on the economy to recover on its own?

Mr. STIGLITZ. No. In short, you know, slowly economies do recover. The question is how long would it take and how various groups would be affected. And, unfortunately, because so little was done earlier, both addressing the pandemic and addressing some of the statures and groups that most needed it, there's already been scarring, and that means that the potential for recovery quickly is inhibited. And that was one of the reasons why, I think, it was so important to have such a strong bill.

In other words, economists talk about hysteresis effects. If you don't deal with a problem quickly, you get scarring, and that was already happening. That's why it was really important to take the strong action now.

Chairman CLYBURN. Well, thank you very much. I've got 25 seconds. I'm going to yield back to the ranking member.

Mr. Ranking Member, you're now recognized for five minutes.

Mr. SCALISE. Thanks a lot, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. Again, I enjoyed the testimony from all of our witnesses.

As we look at this hearing's title talking about focusing on rescue to recovery, clearly, in economic recovery, we want to get our economy back on track. We have seen some really strong indicators already, but we've also seen some fault lines.

And I know Mr. Kudlow brought up the energy industry changes that President Biden's made. There's been a lot of concern expressed about that. But one of the people who expressed real concern about the very first day of the Biden administration canceling the Keystone Pipeline, some estimates say about 10,000 good union jobs eviscerated.

I know, Mr. Spriggs, I wanted to ask you, because the head of your organization, Richard Trumka, had said regarding the canceling on the Keystone Pipeline that he said, it, quote, did and will cost us jobs.

You know, as we focus on economic recovery, Mr. Spriggs, do you agree with Mr. Trumka that canceling the Keystone Pipeline was not the approach that was the right one for recovery, but that, in fact, we should have kept moving forward with those good high-paying union jobs that Keystone was producing?

Mr. SPRIGGS. The labor movement has affiliates on both sides of the issue on the Keystone Pipeline. Those jobs are—

Mr. SCALISE. What's your opinion, if you are here as our witness regarding—you know, I guess, you're representing the AFL-CIO, what's your feeling on that? Do you think it was a good or bad thing to cancel Keystone?

Mr. SPRIGGS. Thank you. Thank you, Ranking Member, for the question. And in my answer I am pointing out that from the union perspective, our affiliates are on both sides of that pipeline project, because it affects both those that are affected by global warming and those who get those immediate jobs. And so—

Mr. SCALISE. If I could point out—

Mr. SPRIGGS. And so, my answer to you is that I'm concerned on both sides of that question. I'm concerned for those affiliates that lose jobs because of global warming and its effect. And, yes, there's a concern about the loss of those jobs, but there are ways to address loss of jobs.

Mr. SCALISE. All right. Well, if I may—

Mr. SPRIGGS. And there are ways—

Mr. SCALISE. We're limited on time. I've got to reclaim—I've got to reclaim my time.

If you're concerned about global warming, first of all, let's recognize, by getting rid of the Keystone Pipeline in America, doesn't get rid of the oil that's coming from Canada. It just means Canada is sending that oil to refineries in countries like India, who, by the way, emit more carbon. So, if you're concerned about global warming and carbon emissions, having the Keystone Pipeline built here by American workers getting high-paid union jobs would actually reduce carbon emissions globally, because now those emissions are

going to be admitted. You know, John Kerry is still going to need jet fuel to put in his private airplane. It's just going to come from Russia and Middle Eastern countries who don't have the standards we have.

Mr. Kudlow, can you answer that question as well, because I know you touched on the energy job losses and what that means?

You're on mute right now, Mr. Kudlow.

Mr. KUDLOW. Yes. Look, efforts to end fossil fuels are going to have—take an enormous toll on this economy. We're going to wind up losing millions of jobs. We're going to wind up losing energy, reducing it. We're going to increase the cost of energy, and it's going to affect every household. Particularly, middle-and lower-income people are going to suffer the most. So, this in my judgment, is a huge mistake.

I do not—I'm not a denier. I think global warming needs to be discussed at length, but I'm saying, we should be adding to the portfolio of energy, not reducing it. I'm an all-of-the-above kind of guy. We should look for technology and innovation in the private sector, not to shut down important projects that will be job killers.

Look, I wanted to—Mr. Scalise, I just wanted to raise a broader point. This downturn was not a macroeconomic effect. It was a natural catastrophe effect. The pandemic is different from the Great Recession or the Great Depression. And these ideas of wild spending and financed by higher taxes provide the wrong macroeconomic solutions. But they missed the point. Here is the key.

Mr. SCALISE. And let me jump in, because we've only got 40 seconds left. Because I do want to add, CBO had projected we were going to get over 4.5 percent growth without—

Mr. KUDLOW. Right.

Mr. SCALISE [continuing]. Taking \$1.9 trillion—

Mr. KUDLOW. Right.

Mr. SCALISE [continuing]. Borrowing it from our grandkids for that.

Mr. KUDLOW. The economy may grow at eight percent this year. And, by the way, before the bill was passed, we had \$1 trillion of bipartisan bills that hadn't yet been spent. The key is opening the economy. It is—

Mr. SCALISE. And I know—I got one more quick question. Because, you know, when you think about the bill, you know, you're going to give taxpayer-funded checks barred from our kids to felons in prison in this bill. But when you look at things like reopening schools, what damage it's doing, shouldn't we be focused on things like that instead, Mr. Kudlow?

Mr. KUDLOW. Absolutely. Reopening schools, reopening businesses, ending unnecessary lockdowns. And the whole key, the biggest stimulus package that we—

Mr. SCALISE. Tax hikes, good or bad?

Mr. KUDLOW. Pardon?

Mr. SCALISE. Tax hikes are good or bad.

Mr. KUDLOW. Tax hikes are going to be a disaster. An absolute disaster. But the best stimulus, Mr. Scalise, is the vaccine, the vaccine, which started with Operation Warp Speed under the Trump administration. Now you've got about a hundred million. We're very close to herd immunity. That is going to open up the entire

economy, and that is going to fill in the minority jobs in the lower-income areas. I don't disagree about that analysis. I do disagree with the solutions for it. Vaccines—

Mr. SCALISE. I know we're out of time, but thank you for that. I know we'll get into this more later. I appreciate it. Thanks.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ranking Member, we have a little bit of an issue here with people with other hearings. Would you agree for us to do—if I could do two Democrats now, then go to two Republicans, we can allow for people to get to their hearings?

Mr. SCALISE. Yes. Yes, we can do that, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman CLYBURN. OK. So, I'm going to recognize two Democrats now, Mr. Krishnamoorthi and Bill Foster will be recognized. Then I'll go to two Republicans.

I'll go to Mr. Krishnamoorthi.

I understand, Chairwoman Waters, that you've agreed to this. Thank you.

Ms. WATERS. I did not. Mr. Chairman, it's difficult. Go right ahead. No, I did not agree, but I understand what you're trying to deal with. Please go right ahead.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman; thank you, Mr. Ranking Member; and thank you, Chairwoman Waters, for your indulgence.

Good morning, Mr. Kudlow. I wanted to just touch on your reference to the vaccines associated with Operation Warp Speed. I assume that you agree that they are safe and effective, correct?

I think you're on mute, Mr. Kudlow.

Chairman CLYBURN. Mr. Kudlow.

Mr. KUDLOW. Yes, I think I'm unmuted. Sorry, sir. Yes, I think the vaccines are safe and effective.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. And I assume that you agree all Americans should get vaccinated, correct?

Mr. KUDLOW. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. By the way, have you been vaccinated, sir?

Mr. KUDLOW. I have. Blessedly, I've received two vaccinations.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Excellent. Thank you, sir.

Can the staff put up a graph that I wanted to just ask Mr. Kudlow a couple of questions about?

Great.

Mr. Kudlow, I'd like to draw your attention to this graph here. It's basically data which shows cumulative COVID-19 deaths over the course of the pandemic, as well as some statements you made during 2020. And on the X axis and the source of the CDC for the COVID deaths, on the X axis is the passage of time, and on the Y axis is cumulative deaths over time.

And so, you know, one thing that I wanted to point out is on February 25, 2020, you told CNBC in an interview about the Coronavirus, quote, "We have contained this. I won't say airtight, but pretty close to airtight." Obviously, over time, we know that

that's not accurate as we've now seen 540,000 deaths, approximately.

On March 24, 2020, in an interview—I'm sorry, in a press conference, you said, quote, "We are heading for a rough period, but it's only going to be weeks, we think." Of course, almost one year later, the pandemic is not over.

And then, finally, I just want to bring your attention to June 22, 2020, when at that point we had lost 120,000 lives to COVID-19, and you told CNBC Squawk Box, quote, "I really think it's a pretty good situation. Fatality rates, incidentally, the fatality rates continue to decline. So, all in all, I think it's a pretty good situation."

So, here's my question, Mr. Kudlow. At the time that you said on June 22, 2020, "I really think it's a pretty good situation," look, you, sir, come across as a very intelligent guy, savvy, sophisticated, to a lot of people, you didn't really believe it was a really good situation on June 22, 2020, did you?

Mr. KUDLOW. Well, look, I will tell you, the case rate was way down at that point, and it proved to be temporary, but all I could do is deal with the actual facts at the time. And the economy was beginning to show a V-shaped recovery. And if I may, sir, back in February 2020, when I made the statement that I made about containing it, it was not a forecast; it was a statement of fact. There were, at that time, 14 cases, only 14 cases. Now, later on—

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. I'm just going to reclaim my time for a second. On June 22, I'm not asking about prognostications or case rates, but after 120,000 deaths, sir, to call it a, quote/unquote, "pretty good situation" is, unfortunately, not the case, when we actually had a very horrible situation. And that lack of candor really matters, because it shows a lack of leadership by the Trump administration.

I'd like to turn your attention to another issue, which is the economy. Mr. Kudlow, in April 2008 in the National Review Magazine during the Great Recession, you said, quote, "recessions are therapeutic. They cleanse excess from the economy," close quote.

Mr. Kudlow, you don't dispute that you wrote those words in the National Review Magazine, correct?

Mr. KUDLOW. I'm sure that's correct. I have no reason to doubt it.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. According to the Department of Labor, Mr. Kudlow, 18 million people are currently collecting unemployment benefits during the recession. You don't dispute that statistic, correct?

Mr. KUDLOW. Wait. Are we talking about now or then?

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Yes. Now, now, now.

Mr. KUDLOW. Well, what does that have to do with what I wrote in 2008?

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Well, what I'm trying to say is this: You can't possibly think that people collecting unemployment benefits view their plight as therapeutic, do you?

Mr. KUDLOW. You're going from one context to another, sir. Look, I supported two bipartisan bills. I helped negotiate two bipartisan bills in 2020, both of which provided unemployment assistance, plus-ups, as they were called, and so I'll stand by that. We changed—like the rest of the world, incidentally. I could pull out

quotes from lots of Democrats and leading Democrats and high Democratic officials who were in the same boat as I was

[inaudible] you're in the fog of war, and you're doing the best you can with the facts available, and when the facts change, of course, we change, but I think it's kind of unfair to go after that.

I supported the unemployment assistance. That's a matter of record.

Chairman CLYBURN. The gentleman's time is expired. Thank you so much.

We're now going to adjust, once again. We are now going to go to Ms. Waters, because she's informed us since yesterday that she has an issue, then we'll go to two Republicans and come back to you, Bill Foster.

Ms. WATERS. Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Clyburn. I appreciate your cooperation and your patience. I am in the middle of another hearing on GameStop, and so I do want to get back to that, but I just want to talk about the pandemic job losses that have harmed already our vulnerable populations. I think there's been some discussion on this already, but since the pandemic began, more than 525,000 of our fellow Americans have died from the Coronavirus. The virus has taken a particularly heavy toll on minorities nationwide, Latinx, Black Americans are more than twice as likely to have died from COVID-19 when age is taken into account. People of color have also lost their jobs at higher rates during the pandemic. The Black unemployment rate now stands at 9.9 percent; the Latinx unemployment rate at 8.5 percent; and the White unemployment rate at the 5.6 percent.

Professor Spriggs, why is it that workers of color have faced steeper job losses than White workers during the pandemic?

Mr. SPRIGGS. Well, initially, for the Hispanic community they are overworked in the industries that were hit the hardest in leisure and hospitality, in particular. For African-Americans, it's a different story, because initially, African-Americans didn't lose jobs at a disproportionate rate. The problem is discrimination in rehiring workers. And as the continued depth of the situation unfolded, it means that Black workers had a harder time getting back. We have to remember that in April, the Black and White unemployment rate virtually collapsed. They were as equal as they've almost ever been. So, there are two different forces taking place here.

We have lost a million and a half public sector jobs. This disproportionately affects women and minorities, and those jobs have not come back during this period. It's a good thing that the rescue plan gave additional funds to state and local governments. We hope that Congress will direct states that the first thing they need to do with the money that they're being given is to rehire those one and a half million workers, and that will make a big difference. That's 10 percent of the gap in payroll that we currently are suffering from. That needs to take place immediately.

So that—that's what makes this more complicated, and we'll have to find better ways of preventing discrimination in hiring to address the gaps.

Ms. WATERS. Thank you for that. You just alluded to discrimination in hiring. And as we know, we have been aware of, and lived with "the last hire, the first fire" for all of our lives. Do you think

that this played an important role in the tremendous and disproportionate lost number of jobs that were lost by Blacks and Latinx?

Mr. SPRIGGS. Yes. Again, the unemployment rate for high school dropouts, the least qualified in our country, is lower than the Black unemployment rate for most of this recovery last month finding the Black unemployment rate was better than the high school dropout unemployment rate, but not for Black men who have their unemployment rates spiked.

So, this is vital to understand that this is not about Black skills, it's about the way in which people reenter the labor market and the scarring effects from this from this. We need a summer youth jobs program because we're not going to have recovered the labor market sufficiently to help those under 25 get the labor market experience to prevent the scarring we know takes place during this period.

That is vital that we have a summer youth job program, because the dispirit impact on young Black workers is even greater.

Ms. WATERS. And just ask, do you believe that it is absolutely responsible important for the government to give assistance so that these jobs can be, you know, gotten again, and that the government should play a real role in doing that?

Mr. SPRIGGS. Yes. And I want to thank Congress for including money for the National Endowment for the Arts. Many people forget that our actors, the member of SAG-AFTRA have been hit the hardest of all groups by not having live performances. The companies that would hire them are musicians and the American Federation of Musicians and our symphony orchestras and our opera orchestras are not being employed right now.

We need the companies that hire them to be secure enough so that when we reopen, they're in place and we can get those workers back to work.

Ms. WATERS. Thank you. My time has been exhausted. Thank you very much, Mr. Clyburn.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much.

The chair now recognizes in succession, Mr. Jordan and Dr. Green.

Mr. Jordan, you're now recognized.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Kudlow, low taxes and less regulation works, doesn't it?

Mr. KUDLOW. Sure does.

Mr. JORDAN. I mean, it worked under Reagan, it worked under Clinton, it worked under President Trump. Is that right?

Mr. KUDLOW. That's correct.

Mr. JORDAN. Doesn't matter if Democrats cut taxes, Republican cut taxes? It doesn't matter if the Democrats reduce regulation, if Republicans reduce—it works for everyone in our economy when you do that, right?

Mr. KUDLOW. Yes. I like to refer to the JFK tax cuts as working for the economy, a Democrat.

Mr. JORDAN. Yes. Tax cuts and less regulation are nonpartisan and they help everyone—were wages up during the Trump economy prior to COVID?

Mr. KUDLOW. Wages rose at record pace, especially for middle and lower income folks. That's what the numbers show from the Census Bureau and the Federal Reserve.

Mr. JORDAN. Best unemployment numbers in 50 years, best economy in 50 years under the Trump administration prior to COVID. Is that right?

Mr. KUDLOW. That is correct.

Mr. JORDAN. Yes. And this was true for any subgroup in our economy—Hispanic Americans, African-Americans, poorer Americans whose wages were rising faster than middle class and upper-class individuals. It was good for every single person in our economy. Is that right?

Mr. KUDLOW. Yes, indeed. Poverty fell, inequality fell. Mr. Jordan, the bottom 20 percent had the single largest gain in income and wages and wealth. The bottom 20.

Mr. JORDAN. Lowest quintile, fastest growth we've ever seen, and we need to get back to that. So, what's going to help our economy more, Mr. Kudlow, letting Americans go back to work or paying Federal workers to stay home?

Mr. KUDLOW. Well, the key here is just unlocking and unleashing the economy, and getting these vaccinations out. That's the single best stimulus we can have. We're looking at an economic boom if we leave taxes low, and leave regulations low, and stop destroying the fossil fuel energy business. We are looking at an economic boom right now. You could have 8 to 10 percent growth in this year.

Mr. JORDAN. But Democrats are getting ready to do all three of those things in the wrong direction. They're getting ready to raise taxes, they're making it difficult for us to use fossil fuel, and they're going to increase regulation under all kinds of climate change rules or whatever. They're going to do all three things wrong. They're getting ready to do that, and that's going to have harmful effects for our economy and, most importantly, for the poorest people in our economy and, in many cases, those happen to be African-Americans, Hispanic Americans who are trying to climb the economic ladder. Is that true?

Mr. KUDLOW. Look, I have severe misgivings about these policies. They will block, obstruct recovery, and you're right. It is the lowest end folks who will be hit the hardest by this. Just on one easy point, quickly, energy costs are going to skyrocket if we take—

Mr. JORDAN. They already are. They already are. They already are. I mean, I got—someone sent me a picture, they said never cost me \$48 to fill up my car during the Trump administration because gas prices are already climbing, which, again, disproportionately hurts middle class, lower class Americans today.

Mr. Kudlow, do you remember the first Green New Deal? Do you remember that plan about—oh, about 12 years ago. This was Solyndra, Beacon Power, Abound Solar. You remember that first Green New Deal that we had?

Mr. KUDLOW. Yes, I do.

Mr. JORDAN. Yes. That didn't work out too well, because every one of those companies—I think there were 26 different companies who got money from the taxpayers, most of those companies had a credit rating of double B-minus, and every single one of them went bankrupt. I don't think that really helped our economy much,



but that was the first Green New Deal, and now we're getting ready for a second.

Mr. KUDLOW. I think it's always unwise to try to pick winners and losers. I think the private sector does it best. Let markets and competition work. Put these industries on a level playing field. Look, I'm not against renewables. You're not either.

Mr. JORDAN. I'm not either. I'm not either, right.

Mr. KUDLOW. The question is, let's have a level playing field and expand our energy portfolio. We need power to drive the economy. If you take away 75 percent of our power in the next 5 to 10 years, which is what some of these programs—some of these policies are suggesting, it's going to be a disaster. And not only will it be an economic disaster, it's going to strengthen the hands of our enemies overseas, particularly Russia, particularly Middle East, particularly China. We will be devastating our foreign policy as much as we'll be devastating our economy.

Mr. JORDAN. Is it time to get back to work, get back to school, and get back to normal, Mr. Kudlow?

Mr. KUDLOW. Yes. End the lockdowns. I think we made a big mistake. We went way too far, too long on lockdowns, and that's why, by the way, the low-income industries have been hit the hardest. I don't disagree with the analysis; I'm just disagreeing with the cause of it. It's the lockdowns that were the problem here.

Mr. JORDAN. States that let people go back to work, states that remained opened, largely opened, have done better than states that haven't, both economic—and maybe more importantly, or just as importantly, on any health measures as well. That's what we need to get back to.

Mr. KUDLOW. Agreed. Completely agree.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I yield back.

Chairman CLYBURN. I thank the gentleman for yielding back.

The chair now recognizes Dr. Green.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks to our witnesses. The quickest way to end the pandemic is to vaccinate as many people as possible. There's growing evidence from the U.K. and other allied countries that the first dose of a two-dose vaccine provides as much protection as other one-shot versions, and equally reduces the spread. According to the New England Journal of Medicine, the Pfizer vaccine provides 92.6 percent efficacy, while the second dose only marginally increases this.

By giving the first dose to as many people as possible and slightly delaying the second dose, the scientific research shows significantly curves the virus to spread by increasing the number of people protected. That's why so many other countries are doing one shot for everyone first to cover as many people as possible. And I want to thank my colleague across the aisle, Congressman, Foster, for spearheading this effort, and I'm hopeful that the Biden administration will respond soon to our letter.

Continuing to give two doses will delay protection for many and may cost lives. A year ago, the American people were told that we needed two weeks to flatten the curve. The next 12 months were unlike any other we've ever seen. Broad one-size-fits-all lockdowns brought devastating consequences for millions of Americans.

Screenings for cancer and other serious health conditions were and still are down. States imposed restrictive shutdown orders, schools were shutdowns and moved to computer screens, thousands of businesses permanently closed their doors.

Meanwhile, young people face a serious educational and mental health crisis as many have not set foot in a classroom for months. Millions of children are not getting the mental health counseling provided by their school system. Youth mental health visits to the emergency department have increased by 30 percent, 30 plus percent in our country. And the CDC survey in August estimated that a quarter of young adults admitted to having thoughts of suicide. The death rate from suicide has not yet been reported. The lockdowns have continued long past the point when they cease to make sense. In fact, less than 300 children have died to COVID; yet, a 10 percent increase in suicide kills far more since the average death to suicide fluctuates between 4,000 and 6,000 a year.

The science is clear that in-person learning is the best option for students and teachers and will save lives. We know this. It's long past time to reopen America's schools. The failure to do so is a failure to put service to students over control by the unions and selfish politicians. Instead, the so-called stimulus passed by the Democrats rewards lockdowns that states and teachers unions are pressing to keep their schools shuttered.

Congress is sending over \$120 billion in additional money to schools, but most \$68 billion allocated for schools over the past year still hasn't even been spent. In fact, the CDL estimates that only five percent of this new funding will be spent this fiscal year. The bill actually postpones the money into future years to support and incentivize these closures, or as I've described above, incentivizing harming children.

Hundreds of billions of dollars are going to reward states for dogmatically imposing lockdowns. This payoff to blue states and cities is destroying lives, and it's time the truth be told. You've heard my colleagues across the aisle pat themselves on the back for this almost \$2 trillion more to our debt, while almost \$1 trillion of previously approved COVID relief hasn't even been spent yet, all so we can reward those states that closed.

This isn't a relief plan. It's not about COVID. It's a spending spree with the taxpayer's credit card.

Mr. Kudlow, former Clinton Treasury Secretary and Obama economic adviser Larry Summers wrote that \$1.9 trillion stimulus will, and I quote, "set off inflationary pressures of a kind we have not seen in a generation, with consequences for the value of the dollar and financial stability."

Sir, could you explain those consequences to this, what it will mean to our economy, to our trade, the value of the dollar, et cetera?

Mr. KUDLOW. [Inaudible] with the bill. And I don't know if I agree 100 percent on the inflation issue, and I don't know if I agree on the dollar, but he's raising the risk, the threats, and he's a very smart fellow. He's a friend of mine. We worked together in the past, and I think people should've listened to that.

You made some important points about the wastefulness of the spending. The incentives structures were perverse. States will get

more money if they have a higher unemployment rate, which means they have an incentive to keep lockdowns. I never understood how that could possibly be in the bill. And also, we had so much unspent money—it was \$1 trillion—and you're right about the \$130 billion. That, by the way—that money for schools—goes—not even going to be spent. I think only \$4 billion will be spent in 2021. The rest of it will be spent in the next five or six years, which shows that the aim here was not to get schools open, but, I think, political interest group payoffs.

So, Larry Summers should be heeded. I don't want to be a bear in this hearing. I like what I see in the economy. I think we are in a boom-like situation as long as we keep opening, opening, opening and we keep vaccinating, vaccinating, vaccinating. We don't need tax hikes. We don't need regulatory increases. We don't need to cripple the private sector. We don't need to end fossil fuels. Let a thousand flowers bloom. Let free enterprise handle this, and we are going to come out of it just fine.

Mr. GREEN. And send the kids back to school.

I yield, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much.

Now, I understand that Mrs. Maloney has agreed that we can now go to Mr. Foster.

Mr. FOSTER. Thank you. And am I honorable and visible here?

Chairman CLYBURN. Yes, sir.

Mr. FOSTER. OK. Well, first off, I'd like to thank Dr. Green for joining Dr. Ami Bera and myself for urging this improvement in the vaccination strategy, and I hope that, frankly, those in the administration and HHS take heed at that as well as the individual states.

Dr. Stiglitz, just a quick question about some of the investments made during the Obama era. As I recall, during the Obama era, we put \$500 million into a loan to this green startup called Tesla, and I was wondering, to enable Elon Musk to build his first factory.

What is the market capitalization of Tesla today? Oops. I believe you're muted.

Mr. STIGLITZ. I don't know the exact number, but, you know, Tesla's now, I think, is worth more than General Motors. It has become the largest valuation of any car company.

Mr. FOSTER. It's my remembrance, it's in the range of a fraction of \$1 trillion. So, roughly, 1,000-to-1 return on that Federal investment, and we'll get it back simply in capital gains taxes when those are realized. We're going to get back that investment hundreds of times over.

Mr. STIGLITZ. Absolutely.

Mr. FOSTER. You know, venture capital is allowed to make some bad investments if the home runs hit it out of the park, as I'm pretty clear that that did.

Now, during the first three years—I'm just trying to do triage on some of the wreckage of disinformation from previous questioning. During the first three years of the Trump administration, did the average person in the top one percent see their wealth in absolute dollars increase more or less than the average person in the bottom 20 percent?

Mr. STIGLITZ. Far more. It was not a balanced recovery. You have to remember we have so much inequality that a one percent increase at the top is multitudes greater than a one percent increase at the bottom. The problem at the bottom is, they have almost no wealth at all. So, a one percent increase of zero is still zero.

Mr. FOSTER. And as I recall, 10 years ago when we were—you were in front of the Financial Services Committee, there was this raging debate about whether the stimulus back then was going to debase our currency and trigger run-away inflation and so on and so forth. And if I recall properly, Mr. Kudlow was on the opposite side of that discussion.

So, I was wondering if you can sort of summarize, you know, did we see runaway inflation, and so on, in the time following the first stimulus?

Mr. STIGLITZ. Absolutely not. In fact, one of the results that we've seen was the multipliers. The bang for the buck was very large. We got a lot of stimulus out of what we spent. The main mistake we made is we didn't spend enough and, therefore, the recovery was much lower than it otherwise would have been.

Mr. FOSTER. Right. And if you look laterally at other economies, countries like China that had a stimulus that was roughly twice of ours as a fraction of GDP recovered more quickly. Countries like Europe like the U.K. had this austerity budget, they saw a recovery that was slower. And, so, I think we've seen a pretty good set of data that when you try to stimulate the economy in the presence of a big output gap, you don't drive inflation, but you speed up recovery.

Is that pretty much—

Mr. STIGLITZ. Absolutely. You're seeing the same thing right now in COVID-19. One of the reasons that we've done better than Europe is that we had a bigger stimulus. And now, the forecast is an eight percent growth for the United States in 2021, and that's because we've now enacted a very strong stimulus, and the forecast reflect the strength and the well-designed aspect of what the bill that's just been passed.

Mr. FOSTER. And I think the point was made very effectively by my Republican colleagues that the key to getting more equitable—a more equitable economy is a tight labor market. Will the labor market tighten up more quickly with or without the stimulus spending that we've just passed?

Mr. STIGLITZ. Oh, absolutely. It's going to be faster with the stimulus spending, and particularly because of the design of the spending. It's going to be directed at that parts of the economy where the bang for the buck will be large, and where the distributive effects will be very beneficial.

Mr. FOSTER. Thank you. And I'll just close by pointing out that you gave, to my mind, probably the best summary of the last financial crisis in your testimony mentioning that of the three things our financial system had to do, which is to allocate capital, do it efficiently, and control risk, out of those three key tasks, we failed at all three. And based on your guidance, we passed Dodd-Frank, and one of my proudest accomplishments is in the last crisis, the

COVID crisis, we did not see our financial system fall apart. So, thank you for your part in that.

And I yield back.

Mr. STIGLITZ. Thank you.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much. The chair now recognizes Congresswoman Malliotakis. Can she hear me? The chair now recognizes Congresswoman Malliotakis. The chair now recognizes Congresswoman Maloney.

Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for calling this important hearing, and I want to thank all the panelists for your testimony today. I especially want to thank Nobel laureate Professor Stiglitz and Larry Kudlow, who are both from the great city of New York.

Our goal is to make sure that equity is at the center of our economic recovery policy. It's important that the information we use to measure the success of recovery tells a complete story of who actually is benefiting from overall economic growth.

To monitor how the economy is recovering from the pandemic, one of the data points we can look at is the gross domestic product, but GDP data is incomplete and can obscure the fact that some groups are being left behind.

Just last week, I reintroduced the Measuring Real Income Growth Act, which would require the Bureau of Economic Analysis, or BEA, to report GDP growth broken out by income deciles, and for the top one percent of earners, so we can see who is benefiting the most from GDP growth.

Professor Stiglitz, would you agree that GDP growth broken out by income level would improve the quality of the BEA's economic data, and do you believe this bill will help ensure a more equitable recovery?

Mr. STIGLITZ. Very much so. And in my written testimony, I actually mentioned that as an important tool going forward. It was also mentioned that breaking down the unemployment rate by various groups would also give a better picture of what is going on. It's important to recognize that it's not just a percentage changes of what are going on, but the absolute changes because of the very dispiriting circumstances, the increased inequality that has been so strong in the last 20 years.

Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you. Shifting topics. I want to talk about how women have fared during the economic downturn. The numbers show that women have been disproportionately harmed by job losses during the pandemic from February to May 2020. As our Nation lock down, more than 11.5 million women lost their jobs, compared to 9 million men. Black and Latino women have suffered the highest rate of job losses. The pandemic has forced many women out of the labor force entirely.

Over the last year, we've seen a two percent drop in women's labor force participation, and mothers of children 12 years old and younger were three times as likely to lose work than fathers of children the same age.

So, Professor Stiglitz, why have women disproportionately lost their jobs and left the labor market during the pandemic, and why is it important to get women back into the work force?

Mr. STIGLITZ. Well, first, let me—Professor Spriggs remarked earlier, identified some of the factors that affect different groups, in particular, there's a differential representation across the economy. The sectors, the hospitality sectors have been most adversely affected by the crisis, and these are sectors where women are a larger fraction of the labor force, and disproportionately in jobs that are affected, and other service sector frontline jobs as well.

And that pattern is partly a reflection of discrimination, a historical discrimination in the labor market. And, so, one of the very important aspects of the pandemic is it has exposed historical legacies in our economy, discrimination, access to healthcare that become much more apparent as result of the pandemic.

Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you for that clarification. The American Rescue Plan takes critical steps to help women get back on their feet and back into the labor force. The law will give working families an increase in the child tax credit, the earned income tax credit, provides emergency paid leave, and expands childcare assistance. It also provides more than \$180 billion to quickly reopen our schools.

Professor, how will these provisions of the American Rescue Plan help bring women back into the work force and our overall economy?

Mr. STIGLITZ. Well, this is related to what we've been talking about before. The ability to get money to children means that the families can afford childcare, and that enables them to get back into the labor force. The sector-specific programs in the bill affect sectors where women are disproportionately represented, and so—and minorities, and so, again, will help recovery be a more balanced recovery than the less comprehensive measures that we took last spring.

One of the important aspects of this bill was that it was much more comprehensive in dealing with some of the sectors that had been left out of the earlier measures.

Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back, and thank you to all the panelists.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you, Mrs. Maloney, for yielding back.

The chair now recognizes Ms. Malliotakis.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Thank you, Majority Whip. I wanted to talk a little bit about Mr. Kudlow, because he's from New York, and I'm from New York, and, certainly, we're experiencing a lot of the same things, and a lot of the same frustrations. The funding that was given to the states, the formula which changed under President Trump and the last Congress, the funding was based on population. In this Congress, it was based on unemployment rate. It seems that it almost incentivized states and local municipalities to keep the economy shutdown, to implement arbitrary restrictions. And then on top of it, they also prevented states from lowering taxes. Those states that did receive the money could not use it for tax deductions.

I had actually sought to freeze taxes and require those states that were receiving it to not now have their cake and eat it too, take the money from the Federal Government and then increase the property taxes, for example, in the city level, or the income taxes in the state level. And because of that provision that was

placed, we're now seeing the opposite occur where the New York state legislature and the Governor are saying they want to further increase taxes and, you know, we know that that's already driving people out of the state.

I wanted to know what kind of impact you think that will have, and do you think that's something that should be revisited by Congress so that way, the burden is not further placed on the New Yorkers that live there?

Mr. KUDLOW. Absolutely. I never understood the perverse incentives that money would be generated, cash from Washington would be generated to states on the basis of their higher unemployment rates, because that is an incentive to keep the economies locked down. And the whole point of this, as several have observed today, we've got to open up the economy and open up the schools. We've created, you know, very grave consequences for children, for parents, for the work force, for women, for minority groups.

We have got to get the lockdown ended. Let's open up everything. That's why I think the only good

[inaudible]. And the other point I'll make on New York City, look, I'm reading, I guess, this morning or yesterday, New York City—it's being proposed that New York City would have a 15 percent personal income tax. Is that—I mean, this is coming from Albany or the legislature? To me, that is just extraordinary, because the city is already lost lots and lots of people, one of the worst records in the country. Smart folks are not going to stand around and pay a 15 percent income tax. They're just not going to do it, and the devastation to the city's economy would be even worse than it already is, and New York City is, I regret to say this because I'm a lifelong resident. Mrs. Maloney is, in fact, my Congresswoman, and has been for a very long time, but the city has not been in good shape and a 15 percent tax rate would be awful.

I mean, some of these states have surpluses. Some of these states have surpluses, and they're still raising taxes. Now that has no macroeconomic sense in my judgment.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. And as you drive the wealthier New Yorkers out, obviously the middle class, working class are left holding the bag, and the burden gets placed on them. With regards to the CDC in opening schools, because it was mentioned earlier, that Republicans voted against the money for the schools. However, there was—\$25 billion was the estimate of the CDC to reopen America's schools, and in the December package, there was \$64 billion put in, which is more than enough. So only under a mismanaged government would it cost eight times as much than the original estimate to do what we're supposed to be doing here.

So, really, the burden has been—\$64 billion was approved. It's been there since December. It's been sitting there, most of it unspent. We've given some to New York. New York has not fully reopened the schools, and so, do you really think this is an issue of more money needed or is it just an issue of these local municipalities doing their job and just reopening?

Mr. KUDLOW. Well, I think it's an issue of reopening. I think it's an issue of ending the lockdown. I mean, look in the bipartisan packages, last April and last December, put hundreds of billions of dollars. I helped negotiate these bipartisan packages. Hundreds of

billions of dollars were allocated to states for schools, for education. And what we're seeing—and one of the other members raised that—is in a lot of states around the country, the teachers don't want to teach. A lot of these urban teachers union, I regret to say—I'm not against teachers. I think it's the leadership that does the damage.

My wife and our two sisters-in-law were both all teachers, but the point I'm making is, they don't want to teach in the urban districts. The mayor of Chicago had to fight her own teachers union to get them to teach. The CDC has said many times, it is safe to teach even without the vaccine, but now the vaccines are proliferating.

So, I don't understand this. I think we have wasted a lot of money and I think too much spending is, you know, going to be an excuse to raise taxes and that tax increase is going to be devastating to this economy.

We could have a great recovery, we could have a great recovery if we limit spending, keep taxes low, keep regulations low, and keep energy portfolios large, not small. Then we have a terrific recovery, by far, the best in the world.

Chairman CLYBURN. The gentleman's time has expired. The chair now recognizes Mr. Raskin for five minutes.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, I was amazed to see Mr. Scalise, the ranking member, reach back to last year's talking points when he tried to shift the blame for hundreds of thousands of American COVID-19 deaths from President Trump to President Xi in China, and the reason that they dropped that embarrassing tactic, you'll recall, is that Trump praised President Xi's performance and the Chinese Government's performance on COVID-19 37 different times, which is why I introduced multiple articles to that effect, including the many times Trump has praised China's handling of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The point is that Trump's lethal, recklessness, and incompetence in the COVID-19 crisis manifested in his promises that it would magically disappear by Easter or by summer vacation, and his hawking of quack medical cures like injecting yourself with bleach and his refusal to develop a nationwide strategy pitting the states against each other produced the greatest public health debacle in American history.

Now, when he was President, the Democrats still, despite all of his recklessness and malice and negligence, despite all of it, we worked with Republicans to pass four bipartisan relief bills that help prevent the economic crisis from plunging into a full-blown economic depression, but we couldn't even get a single Republican vote for the \$1.9 trillion American recovery plan that is going to finally crush the disease and spread science and vaccination across the country and lift millions of people out of poverty and unemployment.

Now, Republican experts acknowledge that this economic help is badly needed. Just a few weeks ago, Mr. Kudlow interviewed former Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin, who called for more fiscal stimulus saying, quote: "My preference would be to see a fifth bill, and then a sixth bill, if needed." Mnuchin explicitly rejected



the argument that we suddenly can't afford to help impoverished struggling Americans, working class people who have been hit the hardest during COVID-19. He said, I felt all along we need to spend what we need to spend.

Professor Spriggs, do you agree with Trump's former Treasury Secretary Mnuchin that we need to spend what we need to spend in order to confront and transform this crisis?

Mr. SPRIGGS. Yes. And what we revealed is, how big the problem of inequality in this Nation is. We passed two bills in the spring. By December, that money had dissipated and the economy had gone back into a stall. That money had been necessary just to keep the economy afloat. We don't appreciate how deeply people in the bottom 20 percent have no liquidity and, therefore, have to have a lot of money pumped into them during these crises.

When we came out of the 2001 downturn, the biggest thing that was a drag was our ignoring the people at the bottom. This rescue plan that just passed, fortunately, pays attention to people at the bottom, so that we can keep their consumption up.

Mr. RASKIN. Professor, the labor movement has always been a strong ally of small business. We couldn't get any Republicans to support the amazing small business provisions in the rescue plan, but now that we passed it, a number of our Republican colleagues are celebrating the value in it. For example, on March 10, Senator Roger Wicker tweeted about the strong support in the bill for independent restaurants, writing: "This funding will ensure small businesses can survive the pandemic by helping to adapt their operations and keep their employees on the payroll."

Do you agree that the American Rescue Act will help restaurants and the people who work in restaurants, Professor Spriggs?

Mr. SPRIGGS. Yes. This is one of the areas that had been slow to be able to get assistance. They had not had access to the PPP in the same way. And in Europe, they kept everyone on payroll. This is going to be an interesting experiment when we come out of this globally to see whether keeping people on payroll was the better way to do this. We, the United States, have very high unemployment rate compared to industrial partners.

Mr. RASKIN. Great. We've got a lot more work to do. The Fed Chairman, Jerome Powell, warned in recent testimony that the economic recovery remains uneven, and far from complete and the path ahead is highly uncertainty.

Professor Stiglitz, in light of this uncertainty which still overhangs the economy, do you believe Congress needs to take additional steps to ensure a complete, strong, economic recovery, including investments in the Nation's ailing infrastructures, the roads, the highways, the rail systems, cybersecurity, and so on?

Mr. STIGLITZ. Obviously, the pandemic has exposed a lot of the weaknesses in our economy. The extent to which the \$1.9 trillion will enable us to get back to near full employment is still uncertain. There are some who think we'll have an eight percent growth. But regardless of that, the need to address the problems that have been with us for so long—our inequality, the lack of infrastructure, the weaknesses in our healthcare system, the problems in our environment, all these need to be addressed, and they need to be addressed quickly.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, finally, I think my time's up. I am just asking unanimous consent to submit a letter that was sent to Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy from 19 different educational groups in the country requesting support for the American Rescue Act, so that we could reopen the schools across America, and it was signed by the school superintendents, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Rural Education Association, and so on, 19 groups representing schools all across America asking for us to reopen the schools with the American Rescue Plan. And I ask unanimous consent to enter this letter into the record.

Chairman CLYBURN. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. RASKIN. And I yield back. Thank you.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much for yielding back.

All time has expired for questions. I do not see the ranking member. I see his space—there he is. The chair would now yield to the ranking member for any closing statement he would like to make.

Mr. SCALISE. Again, I want to thank the chairman for having the hearing, as well as our witnesses for talking about some of the challenges we're facing as a Nation. I think Mr. Kudlow's points were well-heeded that, as we've seen our economy starting to bounce back, the last thing we need to do are things like raise taxes, put heavy regulations, go start punishing industries in America because that is what would slow down our recovery. We don't need to look very far to see where some states have done it much better than others.

Again, I would like this committee to put some time into looking at what states have done well, so that we can try to replicate it, so that we can try to encourage other states as they're getting these big windfalls of money, and I think we've seen states like California will get over \$40 billion when they have a \$10 billion surplus. Not sure if that's the best use of money when we're borrowing this money from our kids to give checks to states that are already experiencing surpluses, to give checks to felons in prison. No one's explained why that has anything to do with COVID relief.

Even giving money to school systems when Ashley Hinson, my colleague from Iowa, had a bill that would say, if schools get new money, they have to use it to actually reopen their schools. I thought that was what we were all about, except that the majority blocked those kinds of bills from moving forward, or those kind of amendments from even being offered.

So it's one thing to say you want to reopen schools, but when you don't even bring an amendment, or allow us to bring an amendment that would dedicate the money to reopening schools, are you really for reopening schools? So I would like to see us continue to focus on being targeted at helping where problems exist, helping our small businesses, helping families who are struggling; not sending checks to everybody, but sending checks to people who are actually in need, especially not sending checks to felons who are in prison. We're already paying for their costs, and they're paying their debt to society. They don't deserve a check from the taxpayers that are borrowed from our kids.

Again, the states that have done it well, they're examples all across this country. Where states did things right, let's let those successes be highlighted. Let's not replicate those mistakes and

states like New York where they still are trying to cover up the data on deaths, why were there so many deaths? Because Governor Cuomo violated the guidelines that President Trump's administration put out there, forced the seniors to go back into the nursing homes with COVID, and even banned the nursing homes from testing for COVID, and then, unfortunately, we saw thousands of deaths. Those families need answers. We ought to be focused on giving them those answers.

So, hopefully, we focus on helping people in need, not just borrowing money for our kids, to give money to states who are experiencing surpluses because they happen to be run by Governors who shut things down and decimated their economy.

With that, I would yield back.

Chairman CLYBURN. Thank you very much. And let me close this hearing by thanking our witnesses for being here today. We appreciate the tremendous expertise you have shared as Congress works to tread a path for a strong and equitable post-pandemic economy.

Today's hearing made clear that economic hardships caused by the Coronavirus pandemic have disproportionately impacted Americans who were already vulnerable. This includes low-wage workers, women, and Black and Latinx Americans.

Today's hearing also made clear that there are steps our government must take now to ensure that the economic recovery does not leave the most vulnerable behind, so that Americans can obtain the assistance they need, while we work to vaccinate Americans and contain the virus. Imagine the success of the American Rescue Plan, I am hopeful that the administration will follow the recommendations in today's letter that I've made reference to earlier, so that we can chart our progress toward a more inclusive economy with hard metrics.

The Select Subcommittee must conduct appropriate oversight so that Congress can move from rescue to recovery efficiently, effectively, and equitably. This starts with bold action to invest in our country's infrastructure through these investments we can create good-paying jobs in all communities, building the infrastructure we need for a more prosperous and equitable future.

In the years following the financial crisis in 2008, we witnessed how an economic recovery can leave communities behind and exacerbate inequities, not to mention how uneven and inequitable, the country's response was after the Great Depression and World War II. As we climb out of another economic crisis, we must have both an opportunity and an obligation to ensure that we have the country's response to this post-pandemic economy working for all Americans.

We must heed the lessons of the past and the valuable insight from our witnesses here today to ensure that we build back better.

With that, without objection, all members will have five legislative days within which to submit additional written questions for the witnesses to the chair, which will be forwarded to the witnesses for their response.

This hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:14 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

